



COLONEL BERKLEY

AND

HIS FRIENDS;

CONTAINING

SKETCHES OF LIFE SOUTH OF THE POTOMAC.

A Tale.



IN THREE VOLUMES.

Sit mihi fas audita loqui. VIRGIL.

What I have heard, permit me to relate.

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COLONEL BERKLEY

AND

18

HIS FRIENDS.

CHAPTER I.

So then I see queen Mab hath been with you?

Romeo and Juliet.

The Peer and the Poet.

“PLEASANT dreams to you, my lord,” said the colonel, as he left the apartment to which lord Umberdale had been shewn for the night—“pleasant dreams to you; and if queen Mab be a sovereign of any taste and discretion, she will find subjects wherewith to make them so, without going out of Hopewell Hall. I leave you to her care, my lord.”

Lord Umberdale did not find the good lady so propitious as his hospitable entertainer had bespoke her. With all the appliances and means to boot, it was long before sleep closed up his eyelids.

We do not wish to insinuate that our southern belle had already made such an impression on the English peer, that, in defiance of the authority of all maps, charts, and atlases, he was dividing the world according to a lover's geography; that is, splitting it into the *where she is*, and the *where she is not*. We do not presume to say it had gone thus far; but certain it is, his fancy was so busy in recalling the features, voice, and sentiments, of Maria Belcour, that he was still awake when the clock struck one. At length, however, his efforts to compose himself to sleep were on the point of being crowned with success; the remembrance of the silver tones of Maria Belcour's voice became more and more indistinct; his imagination painted her form in fainter and yet fainter colours; his vital functions had

nearly lost their sensibility to the impressions of external objects: in plain terms, lord Umberdale had just begun to dose, when the sound of voices under his window again roused him to a state of wakefulness.

If our readers have never visited any of the old establishments of the colonels and squires, south of the Potomac, they will be surprised to learn that the apartment allotted to lord Umberdale, though indisputably considered as the chamber of Daïs, was nevertheless situated on the ground-floor of the house. Considering that the open windows might afford ingress, not only to the demons of the air, but to midnight visitors of less ethereal texture, he held it to be a point of prudent caution to ascertain who were the interlocutors in the dialogue thus unseasonably carried on in his hearing. Softly approaching the casement, and concealed by the half-drawn curtain, he perceived, in the person of one of the speakers, the old domestic who oc-

cupied the station of butler at the colonel's sideboard; the other was so little like any of the mortal mixture of earth-moulds, who are passing to and fro in the world, and walking up and down in it, that but for the presence of its grosser-particled companion, he might have fancied he was favoured by the sight of some Oberon or Ariel of the new world—some Robin Goodfellow at the least. It stood beneath a tall aspen tree, whose tremulous leaves waved by the scarcely-breathing night air, permitted the moonbeams to glimmer through them, and checker the green-sward beneath it. In some places the thick and twisted foliage spread a brown gloom; but in others a flood of soft and mellow light streamed through the opening branches, and enlivened the scene by a glow of silver radiance.—“If I were minded to believe it was a fairy,” said lord Umberdale to himself, as he unconsciously smiled at his odd conceit, “here is every circumstance of time and place to justify the supposition. Out on it! why did I

so lately see that venerable personage presenting the favours of Bacchus and Ceres to his master's guests? I might else have set him down for an Ethiopic sage, some African Urganda, holding in chains of necromantic captivity yon beautiful youth: but hist, he speaks!—now Heaven preserve the youngster from the butler fairy, lest he transform him to a bottle of cider!"

"Master Charley," said the old man, "this is quite entirely out of reason: you must go to bed, master Charley, and go to sleep."

"To bed!" returned the person thus addressed—"to bed, and leave a scene like this! Go thou to bed, and on uneasy pallet stretching thee, be hushed with buzzing night-flies to thy slumber; but for me, I would not give an hour like this for a whole eternity of sleep. What sayest thou? To bed, to bed! and at this witching time of night——"

"You must surely to bed, master Charles," replied the old man, and was advancing as though he would have enforced

his requirement with something stronger than argument, when stepping from the shade, in which he had been partially enveloped, the youth placed his figure full in the moonlight, and discovered to lord Umberdale his singular, though deeply-interesting, and even beautiful features, habited in a costume which was evidently arranged with the view of answering the description of Beattie's Minstrel.

"Hands off, thou friend of an ill fashion!" cried the youth. "You know I brook not that. Hands off! or by the stars of yonder cloudless sky——"

"For mercy's sake, my dear master Charles, don't bawl out in that fashion—you will disturb old master, and wake Miss Mary."

"Enough, enough," said the youth, in an under tone, exchanging at the same time his theatric posture of defiance for one of the deepest dejection. "Enough, Mingo, I will go. One moment, my good old friend—one moment—I do not love the sun: thou shouldst know by this,

Mingo, that I am one of the ‘minions of the moon.’ Oh that I were a fairy, to drink the dew!”

He retreated to the body of the aspen tree, against which he leaned, and in a soft and low, though sweetly-toned voice, sung—

“Let others praise the glare of day,
Whose prospects brightly shine;
The paler, softer, sweeter ray,
Of this lone hour be mine.

“The bower of bliss my fancy weaves,
Is still in moonlight shade;
The morning sun dries up the leaves——

“Hast any poetry in thee, Mingo?—prithree give me some help: there is not so easy a word as *shade*, and yet can I not find a line to suit me.”

“I see,” said the old domestic, “I must wake up master, and the house full of company too: for shame, master Charles!”

The youth, on whom this threat of resorting to the authority of the colonel seemed not to be lost, for he was following the old servant to the house, yet stop-

ped suddenly, immediately under the window at which lord Umberdale was placed, exclaiming—"Mingo, thou didst say truly, the house is full of company; and know, my dingy monitor, that I have bound it on my conscience to write a ballad on the mighty baron, who is come far over sea to regale himself with the sight of our southern beauties. Hear me," he continued, speaking very low, and in a hurried, agitated voice—"hear me, thou most puissant prince of the pantry, and answer me truly, as thou dost hope again to

‘Set Bacchus from his glassy prison free,
And strip brown Ceres of her nut-brown coat.’

I say, answer me truly, as ever thou dost hope to uncork a bottle, and slice a loaf—did this English lord devote himself exclusively to the service of Maria Belcour?"

"Poor dear baby," said the old man, sorrowfully, "I see what has crossed him; and how cunning he goes about it!—I tell you once more, master Charley, nobody was any body with the lord gentleman but

Miss Maria Belcour; he set both sides of her at once, as the saying is; he never took no notice of young mistress at all—and now will you go to bed?”

“ ’Tis well,” said the youth, as relieved of some unpleasant apprehension—“ ’tis well, he is safe.”

Again the old man urged his return to the house.

“ I come, good Mingo,” said he—“ I come. Why these are glorious days—there is employment and honour yet for us poets. The peer of Great Britain, Mingo, had he fallen in love with aught save Maria Belcour, his romance had not run to the length of six couplets. ‘ Woo’d and married and a’,” had been the whole sum of it; but now, unless my intelligence deceives me, it promises all the component parts of a story, super-tragical. Oh, Mingo, Mingo! how it will raise the waters, as I shall hand it down to posterity—beginning, as it does, with love and perjury; and ending, as I trust it will, in battle,

murder, and sudden death.—I come!—nay, I come !”

Lord Umberdale was not superstitious; yet the anticipations of the minstrel, thus exultingly expressed, had certainly something of a sedative effect on his feelings, until weary with conjecture, as to the grounds on which the poor youth founded his sanguine expectations of his lordship's hapless fate, he fell asleep.

“God's blessing,” said Sancho Panza, “upon the man who first invented this selfsame thing called sleep; it covers a man all over like a cloak.”

The baron found it otherwise; or, if he was so covered, the cloak was so stuffed with strange fancies and whimsies of all possible descriptions—in short, Queen Mab had so lined it with all the crudities she could collect at such short warning, both of the old and new world, that the unfortunate baron found it any thing rather than a robe of rest.

He presently fancied himself in the picture-gallery of Arley Castle; and to be

sure he was accompanied by all his new-formed friends "south of the Potomac." The counterfeit presentment of all the nobles through whose veins his lordship's blood had been creeping down to his, ever since the Norman Conquest, were ranged along these time-honoured walls. A flourish of trumpets announces that he has returned to the halls of his fathers; and the tattered banners won in the fields of fame, wave light and fluttering, as by the hand he leads his beauteous bride, "wooed and won in far, far distant lands." But, wonder of wonders! no sooner does he enter, followed by the train of his republican friends, than the costly banners, self-furled, fall back against the walls—a loud crackling was heard, like the rending of parchment and canvass, and the whole body corporate of his ancestors start from their frames, and with looks of scorn and indignation oppose his entrance.

"Stout Gloucester stood aghast, in speechless trance;

'To arms!' cried Mortimer, and couch'd his quivering lance."

Unappalled by this formidable array against him, he makes good his entrance.

“Permit me, my honoured relatives, to present to you a fair and lovely flower, reared in the western world.”

“Reared where?” said a frowning knight, armed from top to toe—“from

‘—————Jack Cade’s camp

The rebel wretches come. Back to Blackheath,

Ye Kentish rabble ! or, by the blushing rose

Our lawful Henry wears——”

“No, no, sir Reginald,” cried an old Edge Hill colonel; “the rabble are not so ancient as that comes to. No, no; I know them well. The degenerate round-head is filling his halls with the rascally remnant of old Nol’s Commonwealth’s men. I knew the levelling dogs.”

“Put that Moabitish woman away,” said a little fat, round, oily man, who had been a bishop in ‘good king Charles’s golden days’—“put her away, I say; or, like Phineas, I will rise up and execute judgment.”

In short, such was the clatter and cla-

mour raised in this house of peers, in opposition to the reception of the republicans, that lord Umberdale was waked by the noise—leaving doctor Clapperton sprawling on the floor; having been knocked down by the fiery sir Reginald, for asserting, in a malapert manner, “that Richard plainly stood in succession before Henry.”

Again he composed himself to sleep—again he was carried back to Arley Castle—and again Maria was in the foreground of the dream. The bridal party are assembled; the nobles and gentry are impatiently waiting to see his American bride.

With conscious delight at the surprise she will occasion, he listens to the remarks which are whispered round the glittering circle.

“Will she appear in character?” says one.

“Oh, unquestionably; in the very dress in which she captivated his lordship. Blankets, moccasins, and porcupine quills, will she sport on this occasion.”

“ Oh, la belle sauvage !” says another. “ But the report of the scalp—can it be true that she actually displays it on her breast ?”

“ No, no—’tis a large silver medal of Washington, I tell you,” says a fourth. “ The medal hangs from her nose, resting on her upper lip.”

He can restrain himself no longer, but leads forth his blushing, beauteous, all-accomplished Maria. A thrilling hum of surprise and admiration arises ; the priest advances to join their hands—but horror ! a wan and ghastly figure rushes between them—a dagger, red with dripping gore, is in his hand ; it has been struck into his own bosom, from whence the purple tide is gushing fast. Sharp misery had worn him to the bone. ’Tis long ere he is known—yet he is known at last. Lord Umberdale recognises him.—’Tis his brother—his long-lost brother. — “ She is mine !” he shrieked, in a shrill, unearthly voice—“ she is mine !”

Lord Umberdale awoke, right glad to

find it but a dream; yet the impression he could not shake off; and finding the day had dawned, though the sun had not yet risen, he determined no longer to toss and tumble, through distempered fancies, but to cool the feverish state into which a restless night had thrown him by an early walk. He found none of the inmates of the Hall stirring at this hour, except the servants. A glass door opened from the drawing-room on the terrace, through which he made his way, and sallied forth on his morning's ramble.

The hand of taste was every where visible. True, there was nothing which could be compared with Hagley, or even the Leasows—yet it was all very well—very well indeed, even in the eyes of an Englishman. In a secluded spot, he found the family burying-ground. It was situated on an eminence; around which a precipitous stream rushed, blue, dark, and deep, until its course was obstructed by overhanging rocks, through which, boiling and wheeling, and foaming, it forced its

way ; whilst the thundering sound of its fall sent up a creeping horror through the blood ; and as the tops of the tall evergreens by which it was embowered waved slow in the morning air, lord Umberdale repeated the beautiful lines—

“ Here Melancholy sits, and round her throws
A deathlike silence and a calm repose ;
Deepens the murmur of the falling floods,
And adds a browner horror to the woods.”

A deep, long-drawn sigh, escaped from some person behind him ; and turning round, he perceived the minstrel of the last night, who had obligingly undertaken to record the woes with which he was so confidently threatened. The circumstances already mentioned were sufficient to apprise lord Umberdale that the poor youth had rightly characterized himself, as a “ minion of the moon ;” and the opportunity which the daylight now afforded, enabled him to trace in every feature of his expressive countenance, the marks of an overheated and crazed imagination.

His dress, which was in no way altered

from what lord Umberdale had seen it the night before, was classically and tastefully arranged ; but its disordered state, together with the lassitude discoverable in his looks and motions, indicated that old Mingo's influence had extended no farther than to induce his return to his apartment. He had evidently held no communion with his pillow during the night.

So little was he like any being which the earth owns, that lord Umberdale involuntarily started at beholding him ; and ere he recovered his surprise, the youth had advanced to his side, and without any previous salutation, pointed to the burial-ground, as he said—"He is not *there* ! No, many a fathom deep he lies beneath the rolling wave ! All was done that could be done, yet they could not bring him here !

His winding-sheet was tight and strong,

For a hammock it was his shroud ;

And oh, how I prayed them to keep it long,

Whilst winds were piping loud !

My very flesh with fear did creep,

As the wave curl'd white and high ;

And it shall not be thrown in that roaring deep,

Was still my frantic cry.

No—let one tranquil morn appear,
Let the sunbeam gild the wave :
Oh, let it shine like a mirror clear,
And then you shall lay my Edward dear,
All in his watery grave !”

“Of whom, young gentleman, do you speak?” said lord Umberdale.

“And have you feasted high at Hope-well Hall,” returned the youth, reproachfully, “and do you ask, who sleeps beneath the stormy surge, that should have rested *here* ? But ’tis well,” he continued, folding his arms with an air of melancholy resignation on his breast — “ ’tis well—for had he been brought here,

‘The hungry worm would his sister be.’

He would have been returning to the dust of which he first was made ! Strength, and life, and beauty gone ! but what then ?

‘So shall the fairest face appear,
When youth and health are flown ;
Such is the robe a king must wear,
When death hath reft his crown !’

And why complain ? I shall go to him, though he cannot return to me !—and then you shall know, gentle stranger, that ‘he

did not float unwept, or welter to the warping wind without the meed of some melodious tear! That part, sir, fell to my poor, unworthy self. Ah, sir! your compassionate looks tell me, that you perceive the ravages which such a task has made on my feeble constitution. Day and night did I toil to frame it; my heart bursting with grief, and my head perplexed and aching with the want of rhyme. I have never been very well," he added, in an under tone, at the same time putting his hand to his temples—"I have never been very well since."

Lord Umberdale's feeling nature was sensibly affected by the mournful air of the poor youth, who thus, in his eccentric manner, lamented the loss of some dear companion. He would gladly have heard from him the particulars of a death, to which the romantic expressions of the mourner gave, at the moment, so much interest. But the chords of the minstrel's affection for the deceased were evidently

strung too high for the touch of a stranger's hand.

Wishing to turn the current of his feelings from a subject which appeared so afflictive to them, lord Umberdale, taking the youth's arm in his own, and leading him from the spot, with the familiarity of an old acquaintance, asked him—"If he was not, at present, engaged in some composition of less distressing and of a less personal nature?"

"I am now," said the youth, "devoted to the writing of ballads; not that I particularly affect such work; but it is enjoined on me by one who may not speak in vain." A tremour was discernible in his voice, and a slight hectic flush suffused his face, as he added—"She is ill pleased if I indulge in compositions of any other nature."

"And will the visitors at the Hall afford you employment?" said lord Umberdale.

"Ample," replied the youth, "ample. The baron of Umberdale and Arley is a

treasure beyond comparison greater than has before come into my possession."

"But his title will be all that is real of which you can avail yourself. The incidents which will furnish out your tale must be all imaginary, I presume."

"Imaginary!" returned the bard. "They shall all be strictly true, and not less tragical on that account, I can promise you. Why, sir, I have already collected materials for the first canto."

"Indeed!" said lord Umberdale. "I would fain, methinks, hear some of those incidents relative to the baron, of which you have, so soon after his arrival, possessed yourself; and above all, how you obtained your information."

"It boots not to say," returned the bard, "how I obtain my information; but information I have. If in their nightly visitations the Muses, in the olden time, were wont to convey to their votaries intelligence, 'fit to be married to immortal verse,' as Milton hath it, such is not their custom now; for in these latter days the

office of news-carrier is intrusted to far more ignoble purveyors."

"Well," said lord Umberdale, "we will not scrutinize your sources of information, provided you give us the amount of it. I myself might perhaps add something to your store."

The youth looked anxiously in his companion's face.—"No, no," said he; "you are too sociable, and kind, and courteous, to be a lord yourself. But what shall we (as wishing to pass from the notice of his informers), what shall we call the ballad? What think you, sir, of 'the Baron of Umberdale?'"

"It sounds well," said his lordship.

"Or 'the Englishman in America?'"

"I like that still better," was the reply.

"Or 'the Lady of Rosemount?'"

"I should like that best of all," said lord Umberdale, "if I could suppose it would, in any manner, be connected with the subject in hand."

"Aha!" cried the youth; "so you are not advised of that. Well, I see you

know nothing ; but you shall hear it all as it passes. I will engage that the ballad shall progress *paribus passibus*, with the adventures of the baron. Favour me, sir, with your good advice. I have made three several attempts : which now do you prefer ?

‘ Sweet Rosemount’s bower was never seen
Deck’d in a lovelier robe of green,
More fragrant and more gay ;
For Spring, with dewy fingers there,
Was teaching every flow’ret fair,
Its beauties to display.’

“ It was a fortunate circumstance for me,” said the bard, laying his hand on lord Umberdale’s arm, as if to bespeak his particular attention—“ it was a most fortunate circumstance that the lady’s return to Rosemount should have happened precisely at the time most favourable for my purpose. She returned from the ill-fated expedition, which gave rise to this ballad, on or about the first of May.”

“ Nay,” thought lord Umberdale, “ if the story is to commence at so distant a

period, I am indeed ignorant of some very material passages.” And his lordship’s interest, it must be confessed, was no longer affected. “Proceed, sir—proceed, if you please. I listen with all attention.”

The bard went on :

“ Fair lady, in your bower again
Around throng all the sportive train,
Who bend at beauty’s shrine :
But, ah ! thou bear’st a foe to rest,
An anxious, doubting, throbbing guest,
Within that breast of thine.’

“ You see, sir, I avail myself of no poetical licence—I adhere to the matter of fact.”

“ Do you, indeed ?” said lord Umberdale, with an emotion, which the poet mistaking for a mark of admiration, proceeded to produce his second venture :

“ Oh, Love ! in what sad, lonely vale
Wilt thou retire to hide thy head,
Whilst I rehearse the mournful tale,
Of—of——’

“ Pshaw ! I can’t make it out, and I do not like it either. Pass we on, sir, to the next and last attempt, at a suitable beginning.

‘ From Britain’s isle to this our shore,
What time a lordly baron came,
Full high the stately stranger bore
The honours of his wealth and name.

‘ But he shall learn, that there is one
On whom, nor rank nor fortune smiles.”

The eye of the minstrel, at this instant, rested on an object which arrested his voice. His animation gave place to a look of loathing abhorrence; and as he turned abruptly away, lord Umberdale was accosted by doctor Clapperton.

The doctor, over and above his republicanism, held himself too much of a philosopher to be aught abashed at this sudden encounter of the English nobleman.—“The top of the morning to you, my lord,” said he; “I saw you an hour gone by brushing away the dew. And so you have already encountered the keen wits of the mad poet of Hopewell? I have perceived you and him yard-arm and yard-arm for the last two glasses, and considered it high time to run down to your

assistance. What! the attack was desperate, was it? The moon is at full, and ‘*stimulos sub pectore vertit Apollo*’—yes, yes, the urchin is now in his altitudes.”

“I was so far from being annoyed,” replied lord Umberdale rather drily, “that I confess I regret the loss of his company.”

“Oh ho!” returned the doctor; “sits the wind in that quarter, does it! Well, I thank the gods that they did not make me poetical. I am of Harry Hotspur’s opinion in that particular, and would rather be a kitten and cry *meow*! than one of those same ballad-mongers.”

“Which accounts,” said lord Umberdale, “for the little love which appears to subsist between you and the poet; for, as I bethink me, doctor, the parting glance which he bestowed on you was not that of affection.”

“He holds all plain, matter-of-fact men in great abhorrence,” replied the doctor; “but his more particular and sovereign hatred is reserved for my unworthy self. He has, sir, by some means come to the

knowledge—(for such is the facility with which he collects the news and occurrences of the day, that I sometimes fancy he has picked up a bag of fern-seed, and walks invisible)—I say, my lord, he has been told that I counselled the colonel to exchange that green tunica of his for a straight jacket; and never doubt me but he resents it with most princely indignation. Moreover, I believe he has an instinctive perception that I have a longing desire to inspect the inside furniture of his pericranium; and he has more than once intimated an intention of anticipating such inspection by cracking a hole in mine. Verily, the crazy-pated youth loveth me not—no, my lord, he abides not my presence.”

Lord Umberdale mused, as though occupied with a subject of some interest; and, after a pause, asked, with an air of abstraction—“And what relation does he bear, sir, to this amiable family?”

“None, sir—none whatever—though

he was thrown, even in infancy, on the protection of the colonel. His father, who was of this neighbourhood, and whose wife was nurse to our Miss Mary, followed the colonel to the wars, acting as his orderly, or some such thing. Well, sir, the colonel was ever counted among the foremost to rush on where wounds, and death, and glory, and such like dainties, were to be had, and did indeed on all occasions, as I understand, make a point of leading his ragamuffins where they got sorely peppered. Now, this bit of a rhymster's father was not the man on such days to be lagging behind; and at the battle of Camden received a severe wound in the leg. On his return here to the Hall, I found it necessary to amputate it; and, from some unaccountable—I say, astonishing—that is, singular fatality, considering the masterly manner in which it was performed, he somehow died under the operation. His wife soon followed him; and the colonel's affection for his old sergeant supplied their place to their child; but this his

claim to favour, protection, and indulgence, is greatly strengthened by the romantic attachment which subsisted between him and the colonel's son."

"The colonel's son!" returned lord Umberdale; "I had understood that Miss Hopewell was his only child."

"She is now his only child," said the doctor; "and a never-to-be praised enough child it is: but he had a son, who died some two years since, during a voyage he was making to the south of France for the recovery of his health. Charles Selby (for such is the mad laureat's name) was his junior by several years; but as young Hopewell, from his delicate constitution, was debarred a participation in the usual amusements of his age, his favourite occupation was the instruction of this young votary of the sisters Nine. Well, sir, deprived of his parents as he was, his affections (as ardent, I promise you, as those of any of his race who ever coupled *dove* and *love*) centred on Edward Hopewell and his sister Mary. When the rapid advance

of young Hopewell's consumption rendered a sea voyage advisable, the importunity of this son of Apollo prevailed, and he was suffered, under the special superintendence of old Mingo, to accompany him. I have already mentioned that young Hopewell did not return."

"And this poor youth," said lord Umberdale——

"Whose wits," proceeded the doctor, "had ever and anon been making slight excursions from home, fairly took wing, and deserted him altogether. As his confirmed derangement is dated from the time of his cousin's death, the loss of his friend is at Hopewell Hall considered as the cause, and he is treated by man, woman, and child, with a corresponding consideration. The creature, sir, cannot be so whimsical, but their love and affection on that account bear him out in his vagaries. But, between friends," the doctor proceeded to say, "I strongly suspect his malady is not more fed by hopeless grief

for the brother, than by hopeless love for the sister."

"Poor, unfortunate youth!" said lord Umberdale mentally: "oh, what would I have given to have heard your story from the lips of Maria Belcour—how differently would it have been told!"

Whilst his lordship was making to himself this observation, the doctor picked up a small scrap of paper, which he handed to his companion, with a knowing wink, saying—"If your lordship will peruse that cantalene, you will perceive some symptoms of love, and of despair, and so forth; it dropped, I doubt me, from the departing man of rhyme. Truly, I opine, from the glance I gave it, that he has treated the subject, which is somewhat old, after a rather newish fashion: yet, put it up, put it up, my lord. There goes the bell, there goes the summons to the hot rolls and butter—and on to breakfast with what appetite you may."

Lord Umberdale's urbanity could scarce repress the look of indignation which he

threw on the philosophic doctor, at this point of precedence given to the hot rolls and butter, on a July morning, over his new friend's poetry; and though he suffered himself to be led along, he read as follows:—

“Not a tear, not a sigh, can I give to thy fate,
Thy willow-branch claims no compassion from me;
In vain shalt thou tell me of scorn and of hate,
If thou garland thy brows with a wreath from yon tree:
An ingrate thou art, at thy lot to repine,
For oh that a garland of willow were mine!

“Say, does it not tell, that a joy thou hast prov'd,
Which remembrance might lengthen to ages of bliss?
She cannot be faithless who never has loved;
Then what would I give for a token like this!—
Your brows let the rose and the myrtle entwine,
But oh that a garland of willows were mine!

“Only one golden moment—I ask'd but for one—
But one look of love had she given to me,
Down the dark vale of years, when that moment had flown,
Its light on my path still reflected would be!
Yet ne'er shall such look or such moment be mine,
And the garland of willow I may not entwine!”

“For a poet,” thought lord Umberdale
—(he did not consider doctor Clapperton
a proper person to intrust a love-thought

with, and therefore gave no utterance to it)—“for a poet, this is the most humble lover I have yet met with : he even refines upon the sentiment of Romeo, when he exclaims,

‘ ——— Come what sorrow can,
It cannot countervail the exchange of joy
That one short moment gives me in her sight.

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This bids defiance to the *absence*, not the *unfaithfulness*, of his mistress. Love, I do believe,” lord Umberdale continued to himself—“love will subsist on wonderfully little hope, but it cannot subsist very long altogether without it;” and with this reflection he entered the breakfast parlour.

As nothing worthy of record occurred during this repast, I will only observe,

“The whole party made a most brilliant appearance;
And ate bread and butter with great perseverance.”

Breakfast over, as the company loitered through the airy rooms of the old-fashioned mansion of Hopewell, the colonel, with Mary hanging on his arm, approached an

open window, where lord Umberdale had placed himself, and where, in spite of his better reason, he was bewildered in fruitless conjectures respecting the materials of which the poet had boasted himself as possessed, and of which he proposed to compound his ballad.

“ I fear,” said the colonel, as they joined him, “ that your lordship’s visit from queen Mab was prevented by my poor *protégé*, Charles Selby, a being scarcely less whimsical in his fancies than her majesty of dreams. The old servant here tells me, he with great difficulty, and not until after much altercation, prevailed on him to retire from the spot he had chosen for the indulgence of his midnight fancies, and which was directly under your windows.”

“ Queen Mab’s dominion over me last night,” returned lord Umberdale, “ was absolute, notwithstanding ; and I have this morning been so fortunate as to form an acquaintance with the poet of Hopewell.”

“Then you *have* seen our poor Charles?” said Mary.

“I have indeed seen him,” said lord Umberdale, “and am greatly interested in his story,” he smiled as he added, “though told by doctor Clapperton. I am, I confess, not a little anxious to see more both of him and of his poetry; for this last may I not look to Miss Hopewell?”

“It is long,” said Mary, sorrowfully, “since his ideas have been sufficiently connected, or, indeed, since he has been sufficiently composed, to commit his effusions to writing. I will shew you,” continued the young lady, “a production of his earlier and happier days; but I must first give you a little history of the circumstance which gave rise to it. Whilst my father was with general Greene in the Carolinas——”

She blushed, and hesitated, as a sudden recollection of the rank and country of the person to whom she was speaking came over her. But lord Umberdale perceived her embarrassment, and hastened

to relieve it.—“Go on, go on, Miss Hope-well,” said he, laughing; “if I have the fortune, whether good or bad I will not say, to be a peer of Great Britain, I am, I can assure you, a *protesting peer*, in all that regards her late conduct to this beloved country.”

Thus encouraged, Mary commenced afresh—“It was during my father’s absence, that this part of the state was overrun by the British; and—and——”

Again she found she was about to trench on delicate ground, and paused—and again lord Umberdale pressed her to proceed.

“Why we are like to have the second edition of Corporal Trim’s story of the King of Bohemia and his Seven Castles,” said the colonel laughing. “Let me try my hand at it.—Your lordship is not ignorant of the devastations committed by the troops of generals Arnold and Phillips during their invasion of this state. A detachment, under the command of an unprincipled and unfeeling officer, was

distressing and terrifying this district by every species of violence and outrage, when the harassing fears of my family were relieved by the appearance of the army of our country's great and good friend, the marquis de la Fayette. He made the Hall here his head-quarters for a few days; and in the artless expressions of gratitude which he received from my children and their cousin Charles Selby, appeared to enjoy, in anticipation, the boundless burst of thanks he was to receive from the lips of a rescued nation. Numberless are the instances, preserved by the tradition of the Hall, of his efforts to restore to tranquillity the feelings of my affrighted family, and more particularly of the children. The brave, the ardent, the high-minded soldier, was soon their kind and playful companion; and poor Charles Selby can shew you a spot which he regards as sacred to friendship and patriotism, and which retains to this hour the marks of his conquest over the great marquis, when he beat him at

hop-skip-and-jump. His enthusiastic remembrance of the great defender of America's liberty, will account for the subject of the composition which I presume Mary is about to shew you."

"I have promised also to shew it to the Miss Belcours," said Mary; "and here are the young ladies—and here the verses. Will you read them, sir?" she added, handing them to her father.

"No, no," he replied; "you have a claim, I suspect, to a full moiety in them, and therefore a right to read them yourself."

"Nay, my dear sir," said the young lady, blushing, "your insinuation puts an end to all proceedings on my part, though I utterly disclaim any participation in the composition."

"Well, well," said her father, "read them—read them—let us hear." And then, without the affectation of pretending not to wish to do that, which she knew she could do well, Mary read the following lines:

COLUMBIA'S FAREWELL TO GENERAL LA FAYETTE,

On his Return to France at the close of the Revolutionary War.

Adieu, then, my hero ! my hero returning
To his vine-cover'd hills and fair valleys again ;
With gratitude's ardours Columbia was burning,
Whilst thus she pour'd forth to her champion the strain ;
Farewell, thou belov'd of Columbia, farewell !

The contest is over, my cause it is won ;
But oh, who may tell how deep is the swell

Of my feelings, whilst owning thy succour, my son !

And now, whilst thy country upon thee is gazing,
Flush'd high with thy glory, ennobled by fame ;
May freedom's pure flame in thy bosom bright blazing,
Form a hallow'd effulgence round La Fayette's name !

Wherever sweet Liberty's standard shall fly,

May it still be the word for the brave to " set on ;"

And when it sounds high in the loud battle cry,

May the minions of tyranny tremble, my son !

The smoke from the altar of freedom is curling,

Its influence is spreading afar as it flies ;

And the star-spangled banner its glories unfurling,

Bids nations awake from their slumbers and rise.

Thy own native land, yes, thy France shall start first ;

And many a bright field of fame shall be won.

Oh, when she shall burst from her fetters accurst,

The vanguard of freedom mayst thou lead, my son !

Yet oh, if their annals with blood and crime staining,

Their day-star of liberty rising in vain ;

They palsy the hand even whilst 'tis unchaining

Their fetters—and hug their foul idols again :

Come thou to the land that first cradled thy fame,
Where love, where affection from all thou hast won;
And my children's acclaim shall shout forth thy name,
As Columbia shall welcome with transport her son!

Ample encomiums were passed on the poor poet's production, both from the respect in which the subject of the poem was held, and from civility to the fair reader.

Lord Umberdale for a few moments alone remained silent; he then said, with much feeling in his manner—"What a lesson, colonel, has that great and good man given to the nobility, to the rising generation of this age! He has boldly stepped forward, untrammelled by the prejudices of birth and education, unseduced by the allurements of pomp and pleasure, and walks on his way, in that path of duty and rectitude, to which even the poet and moralist have only yet ventured to point. La Fayette, sir, has given us a bright lesson, not by precept but by action. Oh, colonel Hopewell, what are

the heroes, the conquerors of the earth, compared to him? What are men,

‘Who left a name at which the world grew pale,
To point a moral, or adorn a tale,’

compared with the great supporter of the liberties of his fellow-men!”

“It is scarce safe to trust me on the subject of La Fayette,” said the colonel gaily, though feelingly.—“My cousin Belcour has taken the alarm, and is stealing off, as I live. But I forbear—I forbear, my fair cousin.—Yet, my dear young lord, if I should have the happiness to see you at this my old mansion some long evening, in December or January for instance—a good blazing fire—your lordship in a humour to listen—and I, (nay, you may smile, if you please, my dear Mary)—and I in the humour to talk—then should you hear of La Fayette: yes, indeed, I could take you over every inch of ground which he traversed, with all his marchings and counter-marchings, whilst, with a handful of men, he kept a superior and well-ap-

pointed army at bay, until he formed a junction with Wayne with his Pennsylvania line. A curious set of fellows had Wayne: they would rather, my lord, watch than pray—rather sleep than watch—rather drink than sleep—and rather fight than drink: excessive troublesome it was to keep them in order. I could tell you, my lord, how ‘the boy,’ as Cornwallis called him, out-manceuvred the most experienced generals of the age, and kept up his poor soldiers’ spirits, by infusing into them his own indomable love for the cause in which he had so nobly engaged. And then (bless the mark, how impatient some people are!)—then I shall tell you how, when obliged to fall back, in consequence of the British having possession of Petersburg, he even on their retreat introduced a discipline, until then unknown in the southern armies, to which nothing but the devotion of our countrymen to his person could have induced them to submit.—What, are you leaving me, ladies, ere I get through the bill of

fare with which I mean to regale you when time serves?"

"Leaving you, colonel!" said lord Umpberdale—"we listen with delight. Even now I enjoy, by anticipation, the pleasures of that evening. Life has few things better than such an evening—with such a man—on such a subject! Go on, sir; you will tell us yet more."

"Will I not?" replied the colonel, all animation at the thought.—"I will tell you how, when our affairs appeared to be most desperate, he was joined by brigadier Lawson, with his gallant friends, Monroe, Bannister, and Mercer. I will tell you how my dear friend, John Mercer of Marlborough, raised a troop of the youth of the best families in the state, at their own expence, and hastened to the gallant La Fayette. I must have time allowed me to expatiate on all these matters. You must not look for brevity (much as I admire it, in conversation especially) when I talk of La Fayette. If he achieved no

splendid victory, performed no singularly-daring exploit, yet was the fame he acquired, in that campaign, true, honourable, legitimate fame.—He fought to save—not to destroy; to rescue from oppression—not to impose chains.”

“And he succeeded—gloriously succeeded,” said lord Umberdale.—“And let me not be thought wanting to my own ever dear and native England, when I say this: it is not that I love the military glory of my nation less, but that I love civil liberty more.”

Mrs. Belcour's command of countenance had prevented the expression of any impatience during this scene; yet she considered the colonel and his fair daughter as having had a full share of the young nobleman's attention. She was quite an adept in what is called “the management of conversation,” and she held it as a point of justice, that it should now take a direction more favourable to her views. She commended Mary's reading; declared it

was a charming mode of spending a morning; and then added—"Maria, what have you done with the ode you admire so much, on general Washington's return to Mount Vernon at the close of the war?"

"And have you, indeed, such an ode?" said lord Umberdale. "Do you know, I have felt disposed to quarrel with your whole nation, because I had not been able to learn that one individual had volunteered as poet laureat on that great occasion? Miss Belcour, you will confer a peculiar favour by reading it."

Maria wanted not motives to entreat her. She really admired the ode, and was glad of the opportunity of exhibiting it to the English gentlemen; and further, Maria knew ('twas pardonable, young ladies—you all feel the same when you sit down to your pianos, or to your harps)—she knew she should excel, and she read—

THE GENIUS OF AMERICA.

INSCRIBED TO HIS EXCELLENCY GENERAL GEORGE
WASHINGTON,

On his return to Mount Vernon, in December 1783.

Thine all the fame that war bestows,

All that peace can give be thine ;

Far expell'd thy country's foes ;

Olives with thy laurels twine.

Now the work of death is o'er,

Pale-ey'd Danger quits our shore ;

Sheath the sword, unbrace the drum,

See the Great Deliverer come !

Wake, my bards, your choral lay,

Hallow this auspicious day :

And hail, as Freedom's joyful ardours burn,

In glory and in peace, my WASHINGTON's return !

Thus from yonder fleecy cloud,

Streak'd with many a bright'ning ray,

Lifts her awful voice aloud,

The GENIUS OF AMERICA !

Smiles adorn her native bloom,

Graceful plays her snow-white plume ;

Waving gently o'er her head,

See the starry banner spread ;

A golden sickle decks her side,

Her hand a volume opens wide :

While at her feet her useless quiver flung,

Her arrows all unbarb'd, her mighty bow unstrung.

“ Exalt,” she cries, “ the plausive strain,
To all my heroes great and free ;
But chief of the illustrious train,
Immortal WASHINGTON ! to thee.

 You heard the trumpet’s hostile sound,
 You saw the meditated wound ;
 And as became the wise and brave,
 Arose your country’s rights to save ;
 Your bosom throbb’d with new alarms,
 Instant you sprang to glorious arms ;
By Danger undismay’d, unaw’d by Death,
On Freedom’s sacred fane to hang the laurel wreath.

“ Fair Freedom smiles, the work is done,
The laurel wreath adorns her fane ;
By me she greets her WASHINGTON,
And pays this consecrated strain.

 Nor thou refuse the hallow’d lay,
 Thy country’s Genius still shall pay :
 For not alone the ensanguin’d field
 Rich harvests of renown shall yield ;
 But pleas’d beside thy calm retreat,
 The civic virtues fix their seat.

While through thy groves and o’er thy crystal springs,
Contentment still shall smile, and honour wave her wings.

“ But who are those that hither haste
Along the bright etherial plain,
With honest wounds each bosom grace’d ?
These are my sons in battle slain !
 More than human seem their forms ;
 Redoubled ardour Warren warms :

Mercer points to fields afar,
Where first roll'd back the waves of war ;
His laurels brave Montgomery shews,
Blooming amid Canadian snows :
And leading on to thee the glorious train,
Exult ! exult ! they cry, we have not bled in vain.

“ What transport swells each generous breast ;
What glorious prospects meet their eyes,
In these fair regions of the west,
When they behold an empire rise !
See Industry extend her reign,
And clothe with harvests every plain !
See Commerce spread her swelling sail
On every tide, to every gale !
See Science spread her morning ray,
And lead on intellectual day !
See Justice rear her adamantine throne ;
And Valour still protect what WASHINGTON has won !

“ Hail, patriot ! hero ! meet compeer !
Of all the worthies hov'ring round,
Whose plaudits sooth thy raptur'd ear
With more than music's sweetest sound.
Yet not such bliss can they bestow,
As thou, my darling son, shalt know,
When thou behold'st these happy lands
Deriving blessings from thy hands ;
The joy supreme of giving joy,
Thy conscious heart shall still supply :
While realms, which Freedom from thy virtues prove,
Shall add to Fame's loud praise, a grateful people's love !”

Lord Umberdale gazed on the fair reader with unconcealed feelings of admiration. As she breathed forth the words of the poet in sounds at once soft and expressive, and as she concluded, he gave way to the most animated expression of the emotion with which he was inspired.

The blush which suffused his countenance at this surprisal of his feelings, did not detract from the effect it had on the company; and for Maria—why she thought they were the prettiest lines in the world, I promise you.

Miss Jane, however, was not so well pleased, either with the poetry or the reader.—“I should have thought,” said she, “the subject was little calculated to excite your lordship’s rapture.”

“And does it not?” said he. “Oh, I have often wished I had been poet enough to shew how I venerate that incomparable man! One of my countrymen, however, has stepped forward in the task of shewing how a British bard can venerate vir-

tue; and though he must suffer in comparison with the American poet on this occasion, seeing the latter has been presented to our ears in the very voice of melody, I will yet do my best;" and he repeated with taste the following

SONNET TO GENERAL WASHINGTON,

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

Point of that pyramid, whose solid base
Rests firmly on a nation's trust;
And while the gorgeous palace sinks in dust,
Shall stand sublime, and fill its ample space.

Elected chief of freemen, greater far
Than kings, whose glittering parts are fix'd by birth;
Nam'd by thy country's voice, for long-tried worth,
Her crown in peace, as once her shield in war.

Deign, Washington, to hear a British lyre,
Which ardent greets thee with applausive lays,
And to the patriot hero homage pays;
Oh, would the Muse immortal strains inspire,
Which high above all Greek, or Roman fame,
Would bear to times unborn thy purer, nobler name!

Lord Umberdale had scarcely finished the foregoing lines (which are the produc-

tion of Mr. Aikin, and which, as believing they are little known in our country, I have ventured to insert), when a morning visitor was announced.—“Mrs. Berkley, of Norborne Lodge,” said the colonel, as with great formality he handed a most magnificently apparelled lady, literally rustling in silks and satins, into the room. With stately step, and slow, did the lady advance. With Mrs. Belcour she was previously acquainted: the young people were introduced and received graciously—the peer *very* graciously.

“My anxiety to pay my respects at the Hall,” said the old lady, “has made me, I fear, most unfashionably early; but Minty insisted on it, it was time to set off. I have no idea of the hours which have been fixed on in your American towns—cities I suppose they are now to be called; but when I was in London, Mrs. Belcour, one, two, and even three, were the hours for morning visits.”

Mrs. Belcour replied, that she believed

the same hours had been fixed on on this side of the Atlantic—"And we owe you the greater thanks, my dear madam, for this anticipation."

"It was Minty's fault, I assure you, ma'am," said the old lady; "though I had no conception that such hours were kept in America; they must be vastly inconvenient to tradespeople and shopkeepers."

The Miss Hopewells and Mr. Henry drew up, but Mrs. Berkley, of Norborne Lodge, thought not of them.—"Does your lordship know," said the lady, "that this is not the first time I have had the honour of seeing you? No, indeed, my lord, I had the pleasure of being introduced to your mother when you were only three years old. Your lordship must take this seat by me, and let me see what resemblance you bear to my friend, lady Umberdale."

Lord Umberdale hastened, with emotion, to the side of the old lady.

"Bless me!" said the lady, rummaging in her pockets, first in one and then in the

other, "Minty hurried me off in such a manner that I have left my spectacles at home."

"Believe me, my dear madam," said lord Umberdale, with much feeling, "I am truly delighted to meet so unexpectedly the friend of my dear, my honourable mother, and scarcely less so to see the venerated aunt of my most intimate friend."

The old lady's countenance, from a look of animated pleasure and pride, at this recognition of her claim to the acquaintance of nobility, fell all at once at the mention of her nephew.—"Ah, my lord!" said she, "all our fond hopes from that quarter——"

"Will be more than realized," said lord Umberdale, with energy; "and I have the extreme satisfaction to tell you, madam, that I learn, since we left New-York, that he has returned to this country."

This information of her nephew's return appeared to excite in the lady neither surprise nor pleasure, and she changed the

subject by inquiring of lord Umberdale after his brother, "who," she said, "was but one year old when I was in England."

It was now lord Umberdale's turn to experience a change of countenance, as he answered with an evidently painful emotion—"I hope he is well, madam."

Little interested as the rest of the company might have been supposed to be in the conversation between these high conversing parties, yet was Mrs. Belcour an attentive, and by no means an uninterested listener. But the old lady having now, as she thought, fully substantiated her claims to the particular notice of the young peer, on the score of her acquaintance with his mother, when she was in England, now condescended to bestow her notice on the company generally.

Mrs. Belcour appeared determined to be a favourite with the old lady, and turned a deaf ear to the occasional sarcasms which she threw out on American gentility—listened with the most polite attention to a long story which Mrs. Berkley had read

in the Ladies' Magazine—heard all about an unfortunate fracas which had taken place among her servants, in which one of Minty's sons had, she feared, behaved very ill, with all the palliatives for his conduct which Minty had been able to produce. She concluded by inviting the party at the Hall to dine and spend the evening at Norborne Lodge, on the fourth day from that on which the invitation was given.

This, our country friends will think, was drawing it at rather a long date; but it had been settled between Mrs. Berkley and her prime minister, Minty, that preparations could not be fittingly made in a shorter space of time; and Mrs. Belcour, though it interfered with her intentions of removing lord Umberdale to Rosemount, sacrificed her wishes in that particular, and consented to remain and accept it.

The company separated on the departure of Mrs. Berkley, and Mrs. Belcour, on retiring to her room, found herself, for the first time since her arrival at the Hall, alone with her daughters. They had just

agreed that their mother wore an air of embarrassment and indecision (which was very unusual with her, for she was at all times accustomed promptly to decide, and vigorously to pursue) when she entered the room.—“ Well, Eliza,” said Mrs. Belcour, “ are you not obliged to me for waiting four days, to give you an opportunity of seeing Norborne Lodge ?”

“ I have no particular desire, my dear mother,” said Eliza, “ to see Norborne Lodge.”

Mrs. Belcour compressed her lips, as if there was something on her mind which she would fain express, but deemed it not advisable to utter ; for a few moments she employed herself in arranging some articles of dress, and then resumed—“ George Berkley, you find, girls, from what lord Umberdale said, is *certainly returned*.”

“ And is as certainly,” said Eliza, with more quickness than the occasion would seem to have justified, “ totally unworthy of notice now that he is come. Did you

remark, mamma, the expressions of old Mrs. Berkley?"

"And did not you remark," said Mrs. Belcour, "the expressions of lord Umberdale in reply?"

"I did," said Eliza, carelessly: "they carried no weight with them. His lordship, I perceive, is wonderfully given to say civil things, and I thought him a pleasing young man until he acknowledged an intimacy with George Berkley."

"Only a pleasing young man?" said Maria.

"Oh yes!" said Eliza, "I think him a great deal more—he is a lord!"

Mrs. Belcour reddened with vexation.—"Those Methodists and Quakers," she exclaimed, "have absolutely made you as vulgar as they are themselves. You pretend to think lightly of the most elegant, accomplished man you have ever beheld, because he is a nobleman."

"No, my dear mother," said Eliza, "I am content only not to think *more* highly of him on that account."

It was evident the discrepancy of opinion between these three ladies was so great, that discussions of no very pleasant nature were likely to ensue, and as this was no time for argument, the conversation ceased, and they severally busied themselves in preparing again to enter on the scene of action.

And now it is high time that we revert to the commission of Mr. Scott, and follow the fortunes of Percy.

CHAPTER II.

Yet e'en in dreams the impression will remain—
He hears the sentence, and he feels the chain;
He sees the judge and jury, when he shakes,
And starting, cries, "*Not guilty!*" and awakes.

CRABBE.

The Gaol.

WHATEVER was the nature of the commission with which Mr. Scott was intrusted by Mrs. Belcour, it led him to the village in which was the gaol where Percy was confined. The night was far advanced when he arrived at the inn, and the family of the landlord had retired to bed, though he himself was sitting in an open porch before his door, enjoying, as it seemed, the freshness of the night air. Calling up a negro boy, to whom Dunmore was delivered for safe keeping, the landlord lit a candle, and led the way into his bar,

with some of the restoratives of which he concluded his guest would forthwith recruit his spirits after his journey ; but seeing, as Mr. Scott approached the light, that his dress and appearance bespoke him a clergyman, he withdrew the key from the door, and accosting him with rustic civility, desired to know if the gentleman was not a parson ?

Being answered in the affirmative, after many excuses for the liberty he was taking, he informed Mr. Scott that he had just come from the gaol—"Where," said he, "an old customer of mine is dying; and tho'f he wont hear talk of sich things, his sitiation is pretty bodish to my thinking, any way : but many a good dollar he's bin in my way, keeping people up a playing of cards for a week together. And then, you know, as the old saying goes, 'when wine's in, wit's out,' and nobody made more by that than old Cog: and, to be sure, he used to be calling for the stuff from morning to night, and from night till morning; but never a drop went

down his own throat, only a little chicken water or so. And so, says I to Betsey, not half an hour ago, says I—‘If there was a parson in ten miles, I’d try to git him.’—And says Betsey, says she—‘If old Cog isn’t got that on him I wouldn’t have for half the county, I wish I may never see to-morrow!’ And so, sir, it just looks like a godsend-like, that you should come this time of night, for he’ll not live till morning, I’ll take my affidavit.”

Though Mr. Scott spent too much time in learned leisure, for a man whose calling required that he should be up and doing, yet he was prompt to every call of duty when it was actually made, and he desired to be instantly conducted to the dying man.

On their way to the gaol, Mr. Scott learnt of the landlord that Cogwell and his fellow-prisoners, Percy and Blaney, had been brought from the place of their apprehension during the night, their arrest taking place, as we have seen, late in the evening. On their arrival at the gaol,

Cogwell had been seized with a shivering fit, succeeded by one of those violent fevers to which that district of country was subject. No medical aid could be, or at least was, procured; the symptoms had continued to increase; and he was now, according to the landlord's account, reduced to extremities. Arrived at the gaol door, Mr. Scott expressed his fears that they should not be admitted, as not a ray of light was visible in the miserable gloomy mansion, except a faint, twinkling glare from the few panes of a window of an upper apartment, shewing the iron bars, and the squalid rags, which were substituted for the glass which was broken.

“Not a bit of fear of not gitting in,” said the landlord: “Ben Lock is sitting up himself with the old man. Odds, Ben would give something clever an he could get old Cog on his feet again! he's bin a good customer of Ben's in more ways than one.”

A rap at the door, accompanied by the voice of the landlord, brought Mr. Lock,

the custodier of this place of “durance vile” (for such it most truly might be termed), from the room of the sick man.

Mr. Lock exercised the twofold profession of gaoler and blacksmith; and whilst the one had hardened and distorted his features with habitual suspicion and distrust, the other had begrimed them with smoke, soot, and dirt; so that when he opened the door, and presented his large and gaunt person, dressed in his blacksmith’s apron, his yellow flannel jacket, which, from the heat of the weather, being open, displayed the bosom of a shirt of that colour which Ovid intends when he says—

“Qui color albus erat, nunc est contrarius albo,”

Mr. Scott actually started back in affright. Some few spots on his face, which the streams of perspiration had deprived of soot, gleamed red and fiery from the effects of the liquor, with which he was liberally supplied, as an earnest of the reward which he was to receive for his civility to the dying prisoner. In short, his

whole appearance, as it was exhibited to the eyes of the clergyman by the flaring light of a candle, stuck in the mouth of a quart bottle, which he carried in one hand, as he cautiously opened the door with the other, was more abhorrent and disgusting than any object the worthy man had ever seen, and in some measure prepared him for the horrors of the apartment he was about to enter.—“Is that you, Mr. Hunter?” growled this man of bolt and bar, as he held the candle to the landlord’s face. “Why what’s the dust now?”

“I have brought a parson gentleman to see old Cog,” returned the landlord; “I ’spose we can go up?”

“Brought the devil!” said the gaoler. “I have just got that young spark Percy to hold his gab about hell, and ’pentance, and such stuff; and old Rattledice is in a doze, and who knows but he may get better? If he comes feet foremost down them there stairs, ’twill be a dead loss to you and me, Mr. Hunter.”

“It’s all one for that,” replied Hunter,

“ which way he comes down, for if he gets well he’ll be hung.”

“ May be not,” returned the gaoler; “ but it is no use to be waking him now, to go bothering the man about nonsense:” and had there been no other means of getting to the bedside of the sick man than through the good wishes of Mr. Lock, it is certain Mr. Scott had found no admittance. But the landlord whispered something in the ear of this compound of Cerberus and Vulcan, the concluding words of which only could be distinguished by Mr. Scott; “ as good,” said he, “ as ever was tipt over tongue.” What was the precise nature of that cabalistic whisper, I know not; but it produced an effect equal to that ascribed in eastern story to the pronunciation of the word *sesame*—for no sooner was it tried, than Mr. Lock made way, and ushered the gentlemen up stairs.

As they ascended, they distinctly heard the breathings of the sick man; and on entering the room, Mr. Scott, though by no means fastidious, was so nearly over-

powered in all his senses, that nothing but the strong desire he felt to render assistance where it appeared to be so necessary, could have induced him to remain.

The sufferer, or rather I should say the sick man (for all were sufferers who were tenants of this darksome place), was lying on a foul and half-stuffed featherbed, which was placed on the floor in the middle of the room. He was still, as the gaoler had said, dozing; and as the fitful light of the glaring candle fell on his haggard, bilious countenance, its contortions, convulsive catchings, and writhings of agony, gave awful witness of the solemn truth of the declaration, that "there is no peace for the wicked."

Standing near, with his eyes fixed on this miserable object, is the scarcely less miserable, though once gay, gallant, and fascinating Mr. Percy. He who had so lately sparkled in the ring of taste, elegance, and refinement—who was the mark and glass, copy and book, that fashioned others—who had excited a deep interest,

and might have claimed a place in a heart of sensibility and virtue, and that heart glowing in the breast of one, whom, had he the world to choose from, he would have singled out as the object most worthy to be loved. Oh, votary of pleasure! oh, victim of ungoverned passions! how art thou fallen from thy high estate! how fully hast thou proved, that the wages of sin are death! death to our happiness here, as well as death to our hopes hereafter.

He had been trying, as the gaoler said, to awaken Cogwell to some sense of his awful situation, and to induce the poor wretch to endeavour to make some preparation for the tremendous plunge into eternity, which he was convinced the old man would, in a few hours, be called to make; but he finds his own ideas so confused, his belief in redemption through faith in the efficacy of the blood of a crucified Saviour is so slight, so vague, so unsatisfactory—his knowledge, even to the ear, of the plan of salvation as pointed out in the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ, is so deficient, that he desists: he dares not

excite fears which he knows not how to remove. He sees a fellow-sinner, steeped in guilt, rushing, unappointed, unannealed, into the immediate presence of a heart-searching God, who, out of Christ, is a consuming fire; and he cannot impart one comfort—he cannot afford one word of advice, or introduce one ray of hope. Ah, what avails his classic lore—his fine acquirements—his possession of the gathered wisdom of a thousand years! At this moment, when the veil which separates eternity from time is almost lifted before his awakened sense, he finds that the boasted, valued, dear-bought wisdom of this world, is but foolishness with God; and that it is in moments like these that he takes the wise in their own craftiness. Unable to draw one comfort from the inexhaustible store of the riches of Christ; he hopes—he tries to hope, that these things are not so; and that death is sleep, eternal, everlasting sleep, in which not even dreams shall come.

The tempter saw his time; the work he

plied. "If," said the despairing sinner, "if there is hope of bliss beyond the grave; that hope is not for me; and as for torment, it cannot exceed—it does not equal this." He struck his brain with frantic violence. "I cannot, I will not die as he does. I will not thus die like a reptile. I will not lie gasping like a crushed and writhing serpent. Yet those I leave behind—there's madness in the thought—I'll think not of it; for this vile world and I have long been wrangling, and cannot part on better terms than now."

These horrid thoughts were kindling in his heated brain; and these words, the ravings of a ranting player, were just pronounced, as the clergyman and landlord entered the room. At the first glance, the unfortunate Percy recognised Mr. Scott as the person he had seen on the evening of his arrest at the General Greene; and he instantly recollected that he had been informed he was in attendance on the ladies of Rosemount. The presence of a person who was in some measure at

least connected with the idea of Maria, and by whom he might hope she would one day be informed of all his love, his grief and his despair, was a cordial to his frenzied feelings, which he had never more expected to taste; and he became calm, if not tranquillized.

Mr. Scott saluted him with solemnity, but with kindness. His first concern being for the dying man, he asked the landlord if he could be waked?

“Why no,” said Hunter; “if you could wait a while.”

“I can wait, of course,” replied Mr. Scott, “or why am I here? And I shall be glad of a few moments to prepare for the solemn and awful work. The comfort I would impart is from above: I must receive it ere I can give. Alas! what have we that is not given us?”

After a few moments, a convulsive groan drew all present to the bedside of the prisoner. He appeared to be awake, but not sensible where he was, or who were the persons around him. Some inarticulate

words he attempted to utter, and then again closed his eyes. On a sudden he looked round with anger and impatience, exclaiming, in a sharp, fretful, though weak voice—"Take that woman and her brats away—what business had her fool of a husband to undertake to play with me?—Starving are they? well, so am I. What does that little girl cry for? Your father—love your poor father—tush, tush, child; your father didn't love you. Take them away, take them away!" he shrieked—"I can't bear it—take them off, I say!"

"Mr. Cogwell," said Hunter, "wake yourself, man; here's a friend come to see you."

"A friend!" said the poor wretch with a sneer.

"Yes," said Hunter; "a gentleman has called to see you."

"A gentleman, say you?" cried the old gambler, essaying to raise his hand; "he is come something of the latest. I could not deal a pack, or lift a box, if I was sure to nick him every hit. What do you

bring gentlemen to me for, when you know I can't play?"

"I am not come to play with you," said the minister, struck with horror at witnessing how strong was his dreadful ruling passion even in death—"I am not come to play—I am come to pray with you." He advanced, and took his hot and clammy hand—"I am come to pray with you, and for you, that the Almighty God, into whose presence you must so soon appear, will be pleased, for Christ's sake, to pardon you."

"Pardon me, pardon me!" said the poor wretch; "what do I want with your pardon? I am not condemned yet. Do you think you can put your tricks on me, because I'm burning with this — fever? No, no, youngster; you'll not catch me that way. The horses I bought, that I can prove; and as for the notes, I'll rub that out with a wet finger."

Mr. Scott paused a moment, as considering in what manner he could get at the heart of this dying reprobate.—"Mr. Cogwell," said he, "it is my duty, as a

minister of Jesus Christ, to inform you, that in a few hours you must appear before the Judge of the whole earth—the Judge of the quick and the dead.”

“As to that,” said the miserable sinner, hardened and sealed in iniquity as he was, “I have been before all kinds of judges: but take the fellow away—don’t you see I’m sick?”

“Wretched man,” said the minister, “you must die. You will fall into the hands of the living God; and none but Christ can save you from his everlasting wrath and fury.”

“Die!—die!” said Cogwell, attempting to raise himself—“die without having my trial—die before I am condemned!” For so long had the fear of the gallows been habitual to him, that the idea of dying from any other cause than being hung, had never entered his head.

“I tell you,” said Mr. Scott, “you must this moment prepare for death.”

“I can’t prepare here,” he cried: “how

can I prepare, when you see I can't raise myself from this filthy bed? I shall be condemned," said he, in newly-awakened agony—"I shall be condemned after all. I have notes—I have cards—I have dice—I have papers; and I can't trust Blaney—he has taken to drink. Let me have a word with you, Lock—I must go myself."

"Be still, poor miserable sinner," said the minister—"be still, and listen to me. I am a servant, and humble messenger of the Lord Jesus, who came into the world to save poor perishing sinners like you from death and hell."

"Save me from death, save me from death!" cried the panting and nearly exhausted wretch; "and that you can't do, unless you get Lock to let me out of this place. As to saving me from hell—don't dare to tell me there is any such place; for if there is (he shuddered almost to dissolution), all the universe can't save me from it."

"You say true," said the minister; "all the universe cannot save you one mo-

ment. But faith in the only-begotten Son of God—faith in the all-sufficient merits of Jesus Christ, and in the cleansing and redeeming power of his blood, can even now save you to the uttermost.”

“It sha’n’t save me!” cried the desperate sinner, in an agony of impotent fury. “I won’t believe it—I won’t believe it! For, if I believe in Jesus Christ, I must believe the Bible; and then I must believe in hell. Begone—how dare you tell me about these things?—begone, I say—begone!”

He raved, shrieked, cursed, and blasphemed, until he foamed at the mouth—was seized with a convulsion fit, and expired with a howl of frightful anguish.

A feeling of unutterable horror kept the spectators of this dreadful departure of the gambler for some minutes silent. Loud gusts of wind had succeeded the suffocating stillness and heat of the first hours of the night, and increased the awfulness of their situation by blowing at this moment

directly on the candle and extinguishing the light. But the clouds, which had been heaving up in the west since sunset, now sent forth the red and forked lightning, and nearly supplied its place. By its red and lurid glare, which at times completely illumined the room, might be seen the minister engaged in solemn meditation on the awful warning just afforded, that the wicked shall be driven away in his wickedness, and that it is only for the righteous to hope to have peace in their death; Mr. Percy and the landlord bending in mute horror over the corpse, whilst their accusing consciences tell them, that unless they become new men, nothing can prevent their dying the death of the wicked, and that their latter end must be like his.

In a corner of the room, stretched on the bare floor, lies the sot Blaney, stupified and unable to rise from the effects of the liquor he has drank; but from time to time, by interjections, oaths, and imprecations, giving tokens of the horrible fan-

cies which tortured his brain.—“ ’Twas Cogwell,” he muttered, “ made the money. Guilty? I can’t, sir, I can’t trust to that—not guilty, your honours, not guilty. No, no, no, no psalm-singing—let it be over at once. But then, jump down there! Oh God! I can’t—there is no bottom—I shall be dashed, and crushed, and fall from rock to rock for ever and ever!”

But the dreams of a drunkard are too disgusting for recital; they are among those things not to be named among Christians.

Ere the goaler returned, for he had left the room to light the candle, the gust rose to a fearful degree of violence; the rushing blast shook the old ruinous building to its foundation; the hail descended with deafening noise, and broke the few remaining panes in the windows, so that the floor was flooded with the rain, whilst the thunder crashed horrible in unremitting explosions around them.

The gaoler, when he returned, was followed by his terrified family. It consisted

of his wife and six half-starved, sickly-looking children.—“ Well, there,” said he, with less of the growl in his voice than he was wont to use towards them, for it was evident, from his altered manner, that he himself derived some comfort from the source he pointed out to them—“ there’s the parson, and now, I reckon, you think you are safe.”

Mr. Scott was considering how he might turn the present combination of circumstances to the advantage of this small, but heterogeneous assemblage of persons, when the mode seemed clearly pointed out by a question proposed to him by Percy.—“ Reverend sir,” began the unhappy young man, “ you see before you an outcast from society—a man so weary with mischances, so tugged with fortune, that but an hour gone by, and I would have set my life on any chance, to alter it, or end it. This, you will tell me, was a desperate resolve ; desperate it might well be, for it was the dictate of despair. The messages of peace and pardon, of which you just now as-

serted you were the commissioned bearer, in a manner and at a moment which leaves me no room to doubt your sincerity, I have, I must presume, often heard before; and I frankly acknowledge, I neither denied or acknowledged their validity. Whether misfortune has humbled me, or the scene and circumstances under which we meet impresses it upon my mind, I cannot determine; but though the message was sent in vain to him (pointing to the body), yet, sir, *I* would wish again to hear it; and I would ask this plain question—can you, do you believe, that we can stand justified and acceptable in the sight of God, by the mere circumstance of our believing in Jesus Christ?”

The preacher looked around him, and his eye sparkled and his lip quivered with emotion, as he remembered the midnight scene in the prison at Philippi.—“I will take the precaution,” said he, “to explain the meaning of the words, ‘faith in Christ,’ and then I will most unreservedly answer your question; and may God grant

that I may speak, and you may hear, after such a manner as may redound to his glory, and your peace and joy in believing! — The ‘faith in Christ,’ which is the cause of salvation, and of which I now speak, is a firm, steadfast belief that Christ died to save you, bringing with it such a conviction of safety, of peace with God, of triumph over death and hell, as induces you to love *Him* for the wonderful goodness and mercy he has shewn towards you, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind; and, as a proof that you do this, you begin, from that moment, to endeavour to keep his commandments. He has himself declared this is the proof he requires, and, indeed, it is the only one we can give. If, therefore, we find that our faith produces love and gratitude unbounded, and, as it is most natural for us to wish to imitate, and as far as possible be like those we love, if we endeavour to keep ourselves pure and holy, because *He* is purity and holiness itself; if we hate and abhor, and fear sin

worse than we do all the complicated and congregated evils of this world, because we know that its slightest stain being found on us, makes us unlovely and odious in his sight, then we may rest assured that our faith is the right faith, that it is the faith by which we are justified, and have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: and I have no hesitation in declaring, as my solemn belief, that by this faith, and this faith alone, we shall find acceptance with him in the great day of his coming. *Believe, and thou shalt be saved*, is the unvaried answer given, according to the sacred Scriptures, to every inquirer after salvation; recollecting always, as I have endeavoured to explain, that we must believe with a heart unto righteousness."

"Then our virtuous actions," said Percy

"Are the evidence of our faith," interrupted the minister—"and here is the rock, here is the stumbling block: but

hear the Scripture.—A man is not justified by the works of the law, but the faith of Jesus Christ. My friends,” continued he, “no man living, or that ever did or will live on the face of this earth, can hope to be justified in any other way since the fall of Adam; even Job was forced to cry, ‘I know it is so of a truth, for how shall a man be just with God? if he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand.’ ‘Be it known unto you, men and brethren,’ says St. Peter, ‘that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified in all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.’ Hear also what St. Paul says; after shewing that all had sinned and come short of the glory of God, and that there was in fact no such thing as righteousness, except as it was derived from and imputed to us by Jesus Christ, he goes on—‘Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law;’ and again,

‘ Abraham believed in God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness ; now to him that worketh, is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt ; but to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness.’

Percy, the landlord, and even the gaoler, listened with anxious attention. The gaoler’s wife looked alternately at the preacher and then at her husband, as though her life depended on the effect which the preacher should produce ; her hands were clasped as by the fervour of her feelings, and even the children were so sensible that there was something deeply interesting to their parents in the preacher’s discourse, that the storm was forgotten.

“ But, parson,” said the gaoler, with hesitation, but with far more of civility in his tone and manner than he had hitherto used—“ what is to become of a man that has been a sinner all his life ?”

“ Hear what the Scripture says,” re-

turned the preacher, "in this as in all other matters of the kind—'let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thought, and turn unto the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and unto our God, and he will abundantly pardon him.'"

"But, parson," said the gaoler, "that is, put the case I could begin all over again; for if I was never to commit another sin, God help me, parson, what's to be done with what I *have* committed? for I always heerd we must give account for all in a lump. If I was to turn over a new leaf now, 'twould be just like my paying off Mr. Hunter there what little matter I owe him already, by never drinking another drop in his house."

"Mark me!" said the preacher, "and give every faculty of your souls to what I am about to tell you. God has, of his infinite goodness and mercy, provided a remedy for your sad case, and for the miserable condition of the whole world. He hates sin, sin is so contrary to his

divine nature ; it is so odious in his sight, that it must be atoned for—there must be a sacrifice—there must be a victim slain—such a victim as this poor world, drowned in sin, and filled with iniquity, could not furnish. He himself, for he alone could do it, he himself furnished the victim ; and how ? by offering—can you, my friends, hear it without gratitude, without emotion ?—by offering his only Son ! Yes, he became man, and, in the likeness of sinful man, was slain for our transgressions : the guiltless died for the guilty ; the pure for the impure : the sacrifice was so great, that the accumulated sins of the world were atoned for : the merit of the victim was so infinite, that it answered for our demerit ; and by Him, and through Him, that is, by Him as Christ, the Lamb of God which took away the sin of the world, we stand acquitted and accepted in the sight of our Creator.

“ Now, if you can believe this from your inmost souls, if you believe that Christ’s blood was shed for you, that God

has consented to accept of his sufferings in the place of those which you most justly were condemned to feel, that the righteousness of Christ is so great, that he spares it to you, that it is imputed to you, that is, that it is received and considered as yours, and that God pardons and even loves and cherishes you like a child, because you are bought by the precious blood of Christ, and covered with his righteousness—if you believe this, you are justified by your faith, and as certain of acceptance as if you had commenced the work of your salvation on the day of your natural birth.”

A groan, which seemed to burst the iron-bound heart of the gaoler, broke from him as the preacher pronounced the last words.—“ I wish,” said he, after a short pause—“ I wish, Mr. Parson, you had not told me all this.”

“ Not told you the truth !” said the preacher ; “ and why not ?”

“ Because,” said he, in a tone of de-

spondence, "it makes me out ten thousand times worse than I was before."

"How so, my friend?" returned the preacher; "let me know all your reflections upon the subject."

"Why you see," said the gaoler, "I've bin to hear preachings, and they always said I should be damned, I should be damned; so thinks I, if that's so sartain, why the best way is to make the most of things while I was here. If God is going to damn me, why the best way is not to think about him. But, God help me, parson, what must I do now? He has done all for me, and I can do nothing; he calling to me, not to damn me as I thought, but just to pardon me! Oh, parson, if I don't come—if I can't come—I'm a million times worse off than I was before."

"But why," said the preacher—"why can't you come? Is sin so delightful to you that you can't give up its pleasures?"

"No, no," said the poor man; "but it's too late with me. I'd only be a disgrace. I'm too, too great a sinner, good Lord; I

hating his very name, and he dying for me ! No, no ; he won't take me—now ; and what Christian man or woman would have any thing to say to Ben Lock ?”

“ All Christians, men and women, my poor friend,” said the preacher, “ who saw you striving to turn from the error of your ways, and lay hold of the hope set before you in the Gospel, would, like your divine and gracious Master, receive you kindly and love you freely, and cheer and encourage you on your way.”

The poor fellow's sobs came short and thick ; he appeared really choked by his emotion. He often drew his hand across his eyes. The stony heart was melted. He looked towards his wife, and made two or three ineffectual attempts to speak ; he extended his hand to her ; she obeyed its impulse as it motioned her to kneel with him, and—“ Oh God ! be merciful to me a sinner !” pronounced in a loud voice, came from the bottom of his heart.

On the evening of a wintry day, about five years after this memorable night, Mr.

Scott, having lost his way (a thing by no means unusual with him) in crossing the country, called at a small but neat farmhouse, to ask a night's lodging. The door was partly ajar, and he looked in to examine the inmates of the house before he made his request. A man, with features strongly and deeply marked, was resting his arms on a small table as he looked with eager attention in the face of a plainly-dressed but pleasing-looking girl, who was reading the Bible to him. Three younger girls were knitting; and two boys were, under the direction of their mother, learning at another table to write. Tears of joy and gratitude gushed from the worthy minister's eyes as he recognised Ben Lock and his family. He was about to enter, when the mother, who appeared to be in bad health, said they must give up their writing, for she must go to bed; and on this intimation, the family ranged themselves round the fire for the evening devotion, and—

“ Kneeling down to heaven's eternal King,
The saint, the father, and the husband pray'd.”

It would be leading me too far from the regular course of my story to describe the various turns of fortune which had placed Ben Lock and his family in their present amiable situation. Suffice it to say, that they considered Mr. Scott as being, under God, the blessed instrument of the father's conversion and their happiness. It is needless then to say with what grateful rapture he was received.

CHAPTER III.
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His years with grievous crimes you need not load ;  
He found his ruin by the common road. CRABBE.

*The Art of Sinking.*

As the gaoler thought he could in no way shew his reverence and gratitude towards Mr. Scott so effectually as by a minute attention to his requests concerning Percy, the prisoner was accommodated with a separate apartment, and furnished, at his desire, with paper, pen, and ink; and when Mr. Scott, who had walked out, returned, he found him engaged in writing. —“ I am come, sir,” said he, “ to make a more minute inquiry into the nature of the assistance which you must allow me to endeavour to render you, and I can assure you——”

“ I am already assured, sir,” replied

Percy, rising, and grasping the minister's hand—"I am already assured that you are a friend and comforter above all price. You have raised me from the very depth of despair, and your further assistance I will freely claim. You will remain, I presume, to perform the last office for the wretched Cogwell. Retire then, reverend sir, to the inn; you must require rest after a sleepless and agitating night. In the mean time, I will write the letter in which you find me engaged. You shall read it, and will, as I hope, deliver it."

Mr. Scott forbore to press his further services at this moment; and agreeing to Percy's arrangement, took his leave.

On his departure, Percy again applied himself to writing, which he continued without intermission until his return; when folding up the letter, which was now finished, though consisting of many pages, he directed the envelope, and placing it in the hands of the minister, desired him to read it: it ran thus:—

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“ MY DEAR FRIEND,

“ Only a few hours have elapsed since the hand which now addresses you would have ended my miserable existence, sooner than it would have recalled to your remembrance one who has laughed at your advice, and spurned your friendship. The reverend person who will deliver you this, will detail to you the circumstances in which I am at present placed, and under which we have met. I also leave to him the task of informing you, how it was that my spirit has been at length subdued; for it was by his agency that, though draining the cup of misery to the very dregs, and sunk to the lowest depths of ignominy and disgrace, I have been induced to believe that it was my duty to live—my privilege to hope.

“ I know what will be your feelings at the reception of this letter: I know they will prompt you to come instantly to me. But of the two requests which I have to make, this is one—do not insist on seeing me. I have borne, and do still bear, mi-



sery in all the complicated variety of forms in which it can torture the heart of man; but the face of a friend, whose confidence I have abused, is more than at present I can bear.

“ Irresolute in the intent of all my actions, and unstable in the execution of them as I was, I know that, when we last parted, you anticipated nothing less than the final accomplishment of my ruin. Well do I remember, unheeded as they were, your last friendly warnings, and your sorrowful forebodings, of the consequences of my wild, ungoverned course.

“ Never shall I forget your answer, as I defied you to the mention of any evil which had resulted from the indulgence of my passions. You acknowledged, that you could not designate any particular circumstance, but that you were convinced, by a continued series of loose, though apparently trivial gratifications, my heart would in time become as thoroughly corrupted, as from the actual commission of

those tremendous crimes which consign the perpetrators to disgrace and punishment.

“ Even now the pitiful sarcasm, with which I repaid this honest dealing towards me, sounds in my ears—‘ And pray, master Methodist,’ said I, ‘ who has put it into your sanctified head to read me this lecture? Are you inwardly or outwardly moved thereunto—that is, does it proceed from yourself, or my noble, ice-hearted brother?’

“ You urged me to spend the day with you.—‘ Why, unless I could multiply and divide myself,’ said I, ‘ like king Henry at the battle of Shrewsbury, I shall never be able to fulfil my morning engagements. Stay here! you have no conception of the sacrifice I have already made at the shrine of our friendship. Why, man, unless, like the said king, I could have “ many marching in my coats,” I shall as it is, lose my reputation as a man punctual to his pleasures. I must attend at two auctions, and three milliners’ shops, with lady Amelia Meltaway—I am deeply engaged in colo-

nel Mäcer's billiard match—am to have my revenge of captain Loader for my mishap in the hazard affair; and have a little matter of misunderstanding to arrange between young Tom Pepperpot, the rich West Indian, and sir Philip O'Flaherty: and yet you and my brother would fain have it, "I am an idle dog." But come, let me hear those high crimes and misdemeanors of which I am to be accused, for my horses are waiting, and I am some nine or ten miles from the scene of action. I dare you to say, I have been guilty of any action unbecoming a gentleman and a man of honour.'

'It is that very absence of glaring guilt,' said you—oh, George, how truly did you say it!—'it is that very absence of glaring guilt which will give your passions strength from habit, until they lead you to your ruin. The tempter knows, that at present you would not bear the horrid front and unveiled deformity of vice; but, unawakened by remorse, you will proceed



in your course, until you become bold in iniquity, and ripe for destruction !

‘ Bravo !’ said I ; ‘ and so, my most grave and methodistical friend, you think I had better commit a good thumping sin at once, and so, having something on hand worth repenting of, my case will be more hopeful than in a state of comparative innocence—“ greater the sinner, greater the saint.” Oh, well, I have heard you mighty good people held that strange doctrine, but I never believed it of you.’

‘ I mean,’ said you, unmoved by my frivolity, ‘ that the evils of the course you are pursuing do not unveil themselves at once. Did the storm, which will destroy your peace, discover as it rose all its horrors, you would be willing to take precautions against it. But you will be imperceptibly betrayed ; the destroyer will approach by latent steps, and from one licentious attachment, one criminal passion, by a train of consequences, lead you on to another, until the government of your

mind is irrecoverably lost. Theodore! the enticing and the odious passions, though dissimilar in appearance, are similar in their process, and lead, though by different roads, to the same lamentable end. I know the nature, and I know the history, of your morning engagements at the Wells, and I fear from them the worst consequences.

“ I wanted a pretext to be angry, and I thought this assertion furnished one. I left you in anger—left you standing on the steps of the elegant mansion of your noble relative at Stokegriffin; and I next address you from a loathsome apartment in a common gaol, in a foreign country, accused of crimes which cover me with disgrace and affect my life. There needs no other comment on what I have recapitulated, for the purpose of shewing you how deeply is impressed on my mind the circumstances of our last interview. Sad as were your anticipations respecting my future destiny, I must believe that the place from whence, and the circumstances

under which, I now address you, will excite not only your grief, but your utmost surprise. Remembering, as you well do, the days of our friendship—recalling the feelings, the sentiments, the habits, of my early years, you will exclaim—‘By what horrible combination of events, by what dereliction of reason and common sense, by what process of evil communication, has he been brought to this?’ Oh, my friend! even by the process which you yourself pointed out—nay, by the very circumstances against which you warned me. My vile and senseless entanglement with lady Amelia lost me the friendship and confidence of yourself and my wronged brother; my engagements with the gamesters, Loader and Macer, ended in the ruin of my fortune; and the poor West Indian fell a martyr to his, or rather my, sense of something miscalled honour. All this you already know: but, alas for the well-being of society! such offences and mischances are so in use, and such



transgressions so familiar, that still it must have remained matter of wonder how I, so endeared to my friends by inborn gentleness and affectionate dispositions—living, as it were, on their smiles, and never happy but when enjoying their approbation—how I, so nobly born, so highly connected, could at once have sunk away from all that was respectable, elegant, and refined—renouncing rank, family, and friends—consorting with such as the fury of ungoverned youth thrust from the company of better men—and plunging from one scene of debauchery to another, to find in each ‘lowest deep a deeper still,’ until all traces of me were lost under the clouds of ignominy and disgrace in which I had enveloped myself! This, I say, must have been matter of wonder, and ’tis due to you that I explain it. All my prospects were blighted, and all the hopes of my friends were destroyed, by my overweening lust of praise. It was my aim, my object unceasing, my ambition, to please—nor did I discriminate. If now

the punk applauded, and now the friar, I was satisfied. Yes, it was my bane to covet praise in all its forms—it was my fortune to forfeit it in as many. Thus a successful jest, that set the jovial table in a roar, and the expression of a moral sentiment, delighting such as yourself, were uttered with the same view, and afforded the same gratification. Still it will be asked, how, with this ardent desire to obtain admiration and applause, could I fall into courses so certain to deprive me of that portion of it which I must have most coveted? The answer will be found in the friendly admonition which I have just brought to your remembrance. My passions had now gained strength from indulgence—I had become ripe for destruction—the enemy of my soul found me entangled in his snares, and bid me turn back at my peril: in a word, I had, step by step, lost the esteem of the wise and good, and my virtue was not strong enough to enable me to attempt to regain it by the sacrifice of my unhallowed pursuits. Yet



such was the prevailing infirmity of my nature, that praise I must have. There were not wanting those who would afford it on my terms—and to them I flew. I will not pain and disgust you by a recital of the various circumstances which occurred as I gradually sunk in society; for when once we have thrown off our sense of moral obligation, there is no stopping-place, until we sound the very bass-string of degradation.

“To banish from my remembrance all traces of what I once was, had now become the sole object of my wretched life. My former acquaintance were not more ready to forget me, than I was sedulous to avoid them; and thus the selection of my haunts and company was made, with no other view than total obscurity from all I had ever known, respected, and loved. Yet still it was my miserable ambition to be the most choice spirit of the wretches by whom I was surrounded; and I became but too well known at many a vile rendezvous for the idle and profligate. As I



one evening entered a tavern of this description, I was told that a gentleman had called in the course of the day, and made many inquiries concerning me, under an injunction of secrecy, which he thought he had secured by a handsome donation to the bar-keeper. The fellow, professing a friendship for me, declared, though he kept the money, he had no intention to keep the secret; and his description of the person of the inquirer left me in no doubt that it was my brother, thus seeking me amid the scenes of pollution and vice in which I had buried myself. This I resented as a high affront to my sovereign will and pleasure. I had not only ceased to be virtuous, but I had ceased to wish to appear so, or, rather, I had lost the strength and tone of mind which would enable me to make the effort; and I at once determined neither to hear his offers of reconciliation, or bear his remonstrances. ‘He has found, then,’ said I—‘he has found me here, and I must make another plunge. Even the purlieus of Covent-

garden and Drury-lane are no longer free from the intrusions of these pretended moralists. I will not be watched—I will not have my conduct pried into, even though I seek seclusion in Clerkenwell, or the yet more infamous Hockley-in-the-Hole.

“With this doughty resolution I left the house, which was in Duke’s-court; and hurrying up Drury-lane, I found myself in Holborn, before I had determined what scene of debauchery and riot should be honoured with my presence for the night. As I crossed Holborn, the clock at St. Giles’s struck eight, and without any fixed determination, I passed through Vine and entered Great Russell-street. It was a cold, raw, wet night, in the depth of winter; and as the numerous splendid equipages flashed by, the scene was rendered yet more dreary by the glimpse which was afforded of the comfortable situation of those who were thus whirled to their several appointments, and where all that art, fancy, enterprise, could produce, was

waiting to receive them. ‘What demon,’ said I, with a sudden feeling of disgust at my situation — ‘what demon has brought me here?’

“Just now the drawing-rooms begin to blaze.”

Why am I not hastening to occupy my proper sphere, where elegance and taste preside? Why am I seeking to hide my head in some miserable receptacle for low-bred vice! And yet,’ I continued, as though I would sooth my awakened feelings by moralizing on my changed condition — ‘what makes the mighty difference? Is it less criminal, first to exhilarate and then stupify the senses with claret, Burgundy, and Madeira — than with gin, brandy, and beer? Does

“The jest which charms the sprightly crowd,  
And makes the jovial table laugh so loud,”

produce less offence and torture to the sober ear, because its obscenity is veiled, but not diminished, by classical wit? But all are not hurrying to “the banquet and



the flowing bowl;" no, not all—but see! I had stopped before a brilliantly-lighted and well-known splendid mansion—"see

"Where now the rout, thick myriads close  
The staircase and the door."

Think you that all is innocence, as well as gaiety, amid that motley group? No, no, no; the reeking steams of flattery intoxicate the brain as surely as a paltry pot of porter. The syren song of some licentious poet floats soft and sweet around—and does it not find its way to the heart? Yes; and poison and pollute, and bring far heavier wail and wo, than the wretched ribald strains of a common ballad-singer. Yes, I will leave,' I exclaimed, endeavouring to heal my imagination with the idea, and to persuade myself, by miserable rant and declamation, that I was acting on some principle; 'I will renounce these scenes of pretended refinement, but real profligacy.

"———Farewell Great Russell-street,  
Farewell to Bedford, and to Bloomsbury-square;  
Thou Clerkenwell and Hockley-in-the-Hole,  
Receive thy new possessor."

“ I turned with affected disgust, but real anguish, from the scenes of my former pleasures. I could not but remember ‘ such things were, and were most dear to me ;’ but the remembrance urged me but the faster forward to scenes where I might forget myself and them.

“ Behold me then in a tap-room in Clerkenwell-close. I would willingly spare you the details of what I there heard and saw ; but they are so intimately blended with the circumstances which drove me from my own country, and made me a wandering adventurer in this, that all must be told.

“ My first care, on entering, had been to satisfy myself that among the outcasts whom I here expected to meet, there were none who had any knowledge of my person. Small as I thought my chance of disappointment in this particular, I was, notwithstanding, fated to experience it ; for I had no sooner approached the bar, than I was accosted by name, by a young fellow who had been one of my late asso-

ciates in Duke's-court. He had appeared with some degree of credit on the boards of Drury; but his loose, intemperate habits, had prevented his obtaining any permanent engagement; and the managers, after repeated trials, finding him profligate and negligent, had finally dismissed him.

‘By the blood of the Mirabels,’ said he, with a theatrical start of affected surprise, ‘but I am glad to see thee! Thou art right welcome to Clerkenwell-close.—Hark ye, my masters all,’ he cried, ‘let it no more be said that the poor abuses of the times want countenance; for I present to your worshipful acquaintance and right honourable fraternity, Mr. ——,’ at once naming me, and proclaiming the rank of my connexions.

‘Nay,’ said a youngfellow, who appeared to have been drinking at a table in a corner of the room—with my acquaintance—‘an’ he have influence with the great, let him use it to get a law passed against the making of deep fobs. I had a fair tug yesterday at a——but mum—the gentle-



man's a stranger. Sir, my service to you. Here's "the devil take the tailors."

"That the tavern I had entered might be the occasional resort of pickpockets and highwaymen, I did not doubt; but this open avowal of the profession of at least one of the company, amazed and disconcerted me. I had hoped to meet persons who, like myself, were seeking concealment and oblivion in the unrestrained licentiousness known to prevail in this quarter of the city. But, except the two persons who had already accosted me, there did not appear to be a single individual sufficiently disengaged to make what is called a 'night of it,' even had their abhorrent manners and countenances left me any wish to make the proposal. Though their applications at the bar for liquor were incessant, yet nothing of merriment seemed to result from their potations. In fact, they appeared to have met rather for some description of business, than for pleasure. I could not but think I had encountered one of those systematized associations of

highwaymen spoken of in Jonathan Wild and other works of the kind ; and this idea was fully confirmed by the conversation of my acquaintance the actor and his bottle companion.

“As the liquor, which they continued to drink in immoderate quantities, mounted more and more into their heads, the fear and restraint which they appeared to feel in the presence of a dark-looking man, who stood near, wore off ; and they began, by hints and quotations, to signify unequivocally the character of the company.

‘I had intended, Mr. Walker,’ said I, ‘to have spent a cheerful evening at the Cross Keys ; but these gentlemen seem to be any thing rather than “good fellows.”’

‘No, no,’ returned Walker ; ‘I grant you they are not such good fellows as we used to meet in Duke’s-court ; but they are indifferent good in one sense. They be men of good government, being governed as the sea is, by their noble and chaste mistress the moon, under the light of whose countenance—they steal.’

‘*Steal!*’ said his companion, ‘a fico for the phrase; the wise call it *convey*. But, I—I forget,’ he stammered, ‘whether you are a duke, or an earl, or a baron; or whether you are to awake some of these mornings and find yourself one—and it sha’n’t want my helping hand to have that happen soon; but you must promise that your lordship (I won’t say grace; for, as old Johnny the fat knight said, “you haven’t, I doubt me, as much grace as will serve as prologue to an egg and butter),” but you must promise to have all invidious distinctions between *meum* and *tuum* abolished.’

‘Silence!’ said the man who had, as I have observed, been watching them—‘silence, if you don’t want me to cut your—tongues out of your heads.’

‘Heard ever any body the like of that!’ said Walker. ‘By the arm of my body, Mr. Bloodgout, we were but letting the gentleman into some of the ways of the knights of the crape and pistol, who frequent the Cross Keys; and telling him there was neither faith, honour, or honesty,



in a man who would not cry "stand!" for ten shillings.'

'You guzzling, drunken sots!' returned the person called Bloodgout, 'you will always be too drunk to stand yourselves, or to make others stand; and you shall both be carried in a cart before long.—Why did you come here at this time of night?' said the fellow, turning to me: 'you should have come in the day, when the house would have been clear, and so I sent you word.'

'Why Bloodgout,' said Walker, 'thou art scant learnt in thy trade; knowest thou not that we that take purses go by the moon and seven stars, and not by Phœbus—he, that wandering knight so fair!'

"Bloodgout darted at him a look of contemptuous anger, but continued to address me.—'Now that you are here, you had better stay. I will see that you have a private room; and you must keep an eye on those drunken fellows until I return. I am particularly engaged just

now.' He moved off; and gradually the room was emptied of its company.

"You will wonder, low as I confess myself to have fallen, that I had not rushed from the house with the haste and horror of the traveller, however weary, who found he had sought rest and safety for the night in a den of rattlesnakes. But no—under the affectation of a desire to know what the ruffian had to impart, I determined to remain. The fact was, I felt glad to find men yet more wretchedly dissolute than myself, and in whose presence I could not fear rebuke; for the horrid practice I had now adopted, of *forgetting myself*!—yes, George, I had now arrived at that dreadful, horrid state,

' —When means, and health, and parts decay,  
When friends avoid you, or if one remains  
To wish you well, he wishes you in heaven.'

"On the departure of Bloodgout we were removed to another room. 'And now,' said Walker, 'I will sing the baron a song. It was made on a namesake of mine—one Walker. He was the origi-

nal Macheath, and it has never been played better since Tom's time, until—you understand me.'

'Do, do,' said Hall, which I found was the name of our companion; 'it will open the way to the business we're upon.'

Thus encouraged, Walker drank off a glass of brandy, and sung the following words:—

'Tom Walker, his creditors hoping to chouse,  
Like an honest good-natur'd young fellow,

Resolv'd all the summer to stay in the house,  
And rehearse, by himself, Massienello.

But he no sooner heard of the baron's success,  
Than he pull'd off his gown and he put on his dress;

Says he, by the stars but I'll strike for no less;

So he call'd o'er the hatch for the waiter.

"Go tell your young lord," said this modest young man,

"That I beg he'll invite me to dinner;

I'll be as diverting as ever I can,

I will, by the faith of a sinner;

I'll mimic all actors, the worst and the best—

I'll sing him a song, and I'll break him a jest—

I'll make him talk better than Henly the priest;"

"I'll tell him so, sir," said the waiter.

'Do you take?' said Hall—'do you take, baron?'



‘ Meaning me, sir?’ said I.

‘ Ay, who! else should I mean? But don’t you understand Walker’s hint? We’re to have roaring doings at the old castle, that’s all. The servants are to drink claret out of tin cups, and the very rats leave the house with tears in their eyes.’

‘ I can’t understand a word you say or sing,’ said I; ‘ but push about the glass and give us another song.’

“ I remember nothing more of what passed until the next morning. Your virtuous courses, my dear friend, have preserved you from any knowledge of the horrors of that morning. My own language fails me, and I resort to a description drawn by a genuine poet, with a degree of truth and energy which nothing but experience could have dictated :

‘ A heavy morning comes; your cares return

With tenfold rage. An anxious stomach well

May be endur’d; so may the throbbing head:

But such a dim delirium; such a dream

Involves you; such a dastardly despair

Unmans your soul, as madd’ning Pentheus felt,

When baited round Cithæron’s cruel sides,

He saw two suns and double Thebes ascend.’

“ If it be true, as has been asserted, that it is the *consequences* of all human actions which must stamp their value, I should, from the experience of that fatal morning, affix to the crime of intemperance the highest grade on the scale of moral turpitude.

“ A keen and nipping north wind had dispersed the clouds of the night, and as it whistled through the broken panes, or in hollow blasts shook the neglected and rattling casements, I lay insensible to all around me; for I was carried, in dreams, to scenes of happiness and home. I loitered in splendid halls, or roved by winding streams, or reposed in cool alcoves, surrounded by those most loving and most loved. Again, I was the pride of my high-minded father; the delight of my tender mother; the companion of my generous, my affectionate brother.

“ It was not for nought that thus I dreamed. No—it was thus I was forced to feel the immeasurable difference between what I had been and what I now

was; for, while looks of fondest solicitude were bent upon me, whilst accents of tenderest love sounded in my ear,

‘ ——— Alas! the watchman on his way  
Called and let in—truth, horror, and the day ’

“ Those only who have slept in the worst inn’s worst room, can form any idea of the objects which encountered my twinkling and pained vision. With curious and indignant eye I viewed the coarse, filthy covering of the miserable bed, and tape-tied curtains never meant to draw.—‘ Where am I?’ said I, aloud, as I endeavoured to raise my throbbing head; ‘ where am I?’ Not long was I left in doubt. The overturned and broken furniture, the floor strewn with such parts of our dress as we had been able to throw off; above all, my two boon companions snoring on a wretched pallet beside me, told me all I most abhorred to know.

“ To satisfy the cravings of intolerable thirst, was my first object. With unsteady steps I staggered round the room,



hoping to find water; and being disappointed, was about to enter an adjoining chamber, when I was struck motionless with surprise and horror at overhearing the following conversation :

‘ So be it,’ said a coarse voice.—‘ If it must be, why it must be. But when bilbo’s the word, I like to see a little matter of reason in the business. Now put the case; we settle the hash for lord —, and this here young toss-pot gets in his shoes, as you say he will—how do I know he won’t have all them hanged as was any way consarned in his good fortin?’

‘ Tom Smith,’ replied a voice, which I recognised to be that of the ruffian-looking fellow whom Walker called Bloodgout—‘ Tom Smith, will you do my bidding in this business, or will you not?’

‘ If I could be certain,’ Smith began—

‘ Be certain of this,’ interrupted Bloodgout—‘ be certain of this, that now I have broached the thing to you, if you don’t obey orders—you understand me, don’t you, Tommy?’

‘ I don’t say I refuse to lend a hand,’ said Smith, in a half growling tone of submission; ‘ but I can’t help thinking, the young spark dropt in here by blind chance after all. I don’t believe he sent you any proposal by Walker, or that Walker ever delivered your message to him. I waited on him all last night, and not one word did he seem to understand about the plan of *doing up* his brother, and getting him the fortin.’

‘ I do profess,’ said Bloodgout, with a horrid exclamation, ‘ that for a lad who has burnt powder, and spilt claret, and cut purses, thou art the most white-livered, sap-headed cub that ever existed! Did he not come here on the very evening I appointed him to meet me?—something too late to be sure, but he did come. Did he not acknowledge acquaintance with Walker? Did he not remain drinking with him and Hall all night? Was not the murder of his brother not only hinted at, but at last openly proposed to him?’

“ The rage of thirst was forgotten, the

palsied tremour of subsiding intoxication ceased, whilst horror thrilled through every nerve and bone; for as the ruffian uttered these last words, a low, solemn, emphatic voice pronounced ‘Theodore!’—and turning round, I beheld my brother.

“It was not simply scorn or anger, sorrow or pity, which appeared in his countenance, as, on my involuntarily stumbling towards him, he started back, but rather a combination of all those passions.

‘And this,’ cried he, in a voice of anguished emotion—‘and this is the son of my honoured, noble-hearted father—the child of my dear sainted mother!’

‘Stop, stop!’ I exclaimed—‘stop, or you will force me——’

‘To call your bravoës from the next room. But know, that my life, wretched as you render it, is of too much value to be ventured into this den of murderers without a sufficient guard.’

“He stepped back to the door, and a police officer with his attendants entered on the instant.—‘Secure the villains in



that room,' said he; and, as the men rushed towards it, a window was heard to be thrown up with violence, and when the door was forced, the room was found deserted.

'They have escaped, my lord,' said the officer, returning to my brother.

'Not escaped,' said several voices at once, as the men drew their heads from the open window — 'not escaped this time,' they cried, as they hurried tumultuously down.

'I will wait the result here,' said my brother to the officer, who bowed and left the room.

"Overcome by my emotions, I had unconsciously seated myself on the side of the bed, and covered my face with my hands. My brother paced the room in silence: twice he stopped before me as intending to address me. My situation was dreadful, but it did not last.

"The officer returned, and used as he was to scenes of violence and outrage, his

countenance betrayed symptoms of horror.—‘Here has been speedy execution of justice, my lord,’ said he: ‘the ruffian, whom they call Bloodgout, has dashed his brains out, by his jump from the window; and the understrapper, Smith, has fractured his leg in such a manner, that it must be amputated above the knee.’

‘Speedy indeed!’ said my brother, after a pause, during which he appeared deeply affected.—‘Then,’ said he, ‘will you have the goodness, sir, to see the poor wretch who survives as well attended as his miserable situation will permit, and let it be understood that I will defray the expence. I will join you below, sir, in a few minutes.’

“Again I was left alone with my brother, and again overwhelmed with confusion, remorse, and anguish. I hid my face with my hands, and sobbed aloud. He manifested no symptoms of being moved at my distress; and a feeling of pride coming to my aid, I raised myself from the recumbent posture in which I

was sitting, and attempted to speak; but my tongue clave to my mouth—I became deathly sick, and sunk on the bed without a power of further exertion.

‘Will you raise yourself up, sir,’ said he, ‘and hear the few words I have to say to you?’

“Pride again restored to me sufficient strength to raise myself from the bed. He looked at me, and his features relaxed something of the severity with which he had hitherto regarded me.—‘I do not mean to reproach you,’ said he: ‘these are probably the last words I shall ever utter to him who was once my brother, and they shall not be those of bitterness. The great Disposer of all things has shewn me his gracious mercy this dreadful morning, whilst he has dealt tremendous justice on those who were to have been my murderers. I am thus saved the indelible disgrace, the unspeakable horror, which I must have felt, in being forced to stand forth as the public accuser of my own



brother, as joined in a conspiracy with hireling bravoës to shed my blood. I say I am spared this; for of the miserable sots who, drenched in beastly intoxication, are now lying beside you, I count nothing: it shall be more my care to keep you from them, than to prevent their designs against me. Theodore! we must now part. I have done all the fondest, the truest affection could dictate, and I must now commit you to *Him* who alone can save you, even to your offended God. May *He*, in his good time, restore you to those paths of peace from which you have so widely strayed!—Farewell! farewell! I forgive you.’

“He extended his hand; I endeavoured to throw myself forward to embrace him, but he shrunk back, as though his horror of my touch was involuntary, and ere I could recover myself he had left the room.

“Stunned by a confused, though acute sense of the depth to which I had fallen, I sat stupified by grief and horror, gazing with a vacant stare at the door through

which he had passed. How long I remained in this situation I am unable to say, but I was at length roused from it by a sudden desperate resolution to follow him, to convince him of my entire innocence of any design against his life; or to put an end to my own most wretched existence in his presence. With tremulous haste I adjusted my dress in the best manner I could, and with quick, though unsteady steps, descended to the lower apartments. To my utter astonishment I found them deserted. I was about to enter the tap, or bar-room, the door of which was ajar, but from which, as I reached it, there came such an effluvia from the relics of the last night's entertainment, that weak and nervous as I was, my head swam, my breath came short, and I was forced to lean for support against the wall of the passage. Here again, for the second time on this eventful morning, I was forced to overhear a conversation, of which my distracting situation formed the subject.

“ I shall be able, my friend, to give you verbatim the whole disgusting recital, for every word is indelibly imprinted on my memory ; and I do so the rather that you may have precisely the same, and, indeed, the only light, which I have ever had thrown over the circumstances connected with that dark and horrid affair.

‘ It’s the rummest business as ever I heard tell of,’ said one ; ‘ and dang my old shoes if I’m up to the notch of it yet.’

‘ Ax Jim Thompson,’ said another ; ‘ I’ve a notion he can tell all and how about the matter ; for, to my thinking, he and the devil had the management of the biggest end of it.’

‘ I’ve a notion I can,’ cried a third, getting up and putting a large quid of tobacco into his mouth ; ‘ I’ve a sort of a notion I can tell the whole tote of the matter ; but how the devil come to let the mess be kicked over, just as ’twas ready to be sarved up to him, I can’t make out : thof ’twas all along of he after all, for if he had kept his claws off of old master Hookemly



a few days longer, odds life, but he'd 'ave had as pretty a picking as his devilship could desire.'

'But let us hear,' cried both of his companions, 'how the thing come to be blown, before any stroke was struck worth stirring about.'

'Why, I tell you,' said Thompson; 'old master's death was the cause of the whole mishap of the thing's getting out, or into Butler's hands, and that's the same thing.—It was only yesterday morning I was with him, and after we had settled some little odd matters—(by the same token, Jack Swales, you had done yourself up with the old man, by the scrape you got him into, about the young fellow you took up for stealing the gentleman's cocked hat—plain swearing wont always do, Jack, you should attend to circumstances)—'Well, Jimmy,' says he, 'and so you tell me there's a plot laid to murder young lord ——, and that you know all the persons concerned?'

'Why, please your honour,' says I, 'I

can't help of knowing 'em, for 'twas I first set 'em on the lay.'

'Have a care, James,' says he, 'have a care what you say.'

'Oh, never fear, your honour,' says I; 'let alone Jim Thompson for a slippery trick. Don't your honour mind I told you of two player men daddy Bloodgout had entered? well, you see, they were idle, drunken dogs, and daddy was going to hand 'em over to your worship; but I, hearing Walker bragging of his acquaintance with the honourable Mr. —, brother of lord —, I winded game in a minute. So, says I to him, 'Walker,' says I, 's'pose your honourable friend was lord — himself, what royal doings you might have at — Castle?' My eyes, your honour, but he smoked it. The lad is none so dull when he is about half cut. So I left it boling in the block, as the sailors say.—The next time I meets him, 'Walker,' says I, 'when is your friend to be lord —?' So with that he ups and tells me, that his old daddy Blood had promised to

do the job, if he would break the matter to the young spark; but that he was afraid to do that, and ax'd me what I would advise: so I tells him to give Bloodgout to understand the young man was consenting, to keep him in good humour; and if he follows his present courses a little longer, you may put your "come hither on your honourable friend" for as bad a matter as that, before he is many weeks older. 'I know how the thing will work, your honour,' says I; 'and I have got my net round the whole covey, and will draw the strings whenever your worship gives the word.'

'Don't be precipitate, James,' says old master—'don't be precipitate; remember how much credit, and money too, you lost us by hurrying on too fast in the matter of burning the farmers' barns. Keep close, James—wait till the stroke is struck,' says he—'and then, James, and then our harvest will come.'

'Now, you see, I was after taking old



master's advice; but I just stepped in here last night to get an inkling of what was going on, and body o' me, but the first thing I sees is the young spark himself!—who but he, cheek by jowl with Walker and Hall!—‘Oho, honey!’ says I to myself, ‘is that your play?—the game will be sooner up than I looked for; but you sha’n’t hide your hands from me, you may swear that.’ So I was slipping away for the old cover in Mutton-lane, for I knew Bloodgout had business there, when who should I meet but Mat ‘Twitcher, coming hot foot from old master’s!—‘Oh, Jemmy,’ says he, ‘were lost men!—run with the speed o’ light—I’m sint for ye to old master—custard and coddling tarts has done our business.’—‘What’s the matter?’ says I.—‘The matter is,’ says he, ‘that the kind old soul has been eating a dinner for the good of Lumley’s Almshouse, and it’s well if his charity will cover his sins—for it’s kilt him, or near it—and sure enough he had given the last hickup before I got to him.’ And now, boys, here’s the busi-

ness—the first man I sees in the house was Justice Butler.—‘Thompson,’ says he, ‘can you tell the truth, if I prove it your interest to do so?’—‘I’ll try, your honour,’ says I; for I knew if the old sinner had blabbed, I was in his hands past all redeem.—‘Then tell me instantly,’ says he, ‘all you know concerning the intended murder of lord ——.’ Now, lads, take good notice of what I am going to say. It may sometimes happen that it is best for a man to tell the plain truth, ‘specially when you get into such hands as Justice Butler’s—so I out with all I knew, from beginning to end.—‘And where is Bloodgout?’ says he.—‘He’ll be at the Cross Keys about presently,’ says I.—‘And who is with him?’—‘Tom Smith is there.’—Tom was there as a waiter, and thought I didn’t mark him—but he couldn’t bam me—I knew what he was after.—‘But are you sure you saw young Mr. —— there?’ says he.—‘Sure!’ says I; ‘why he is there at this blessed minute.’ So then he fidgeted about like a

man in a quandary : at last, says he—  
‘ Call up two of your fellows ; I suppose the house is never without some of the lads of the staff.’—‘ Why, your honour,’ says I, ‘ you won’t go for to blow the matter yet ? there’s nothing done you can take hold on.’ He looked at me like mad.—‘ Your safety,’ says he, ‘ lies in your obedience. There *shall* be *nothing* done to take hold on, as you say, if I can prevent it. Call the men.’ So then I called you ; and now you have the whole story.’

“ And my brother then does believe me the accomplice of common stabbers, and engaged too in a plot against *his* life !—and I delay to find him—to prove to him——Suddenly the reflection shot across my brain like a bolt of ice, freezing every faculty, that I could not *prove* to him my innocence—I could only *assert it*, in the face of such a combination of circumstances as must overwhelm me with confusion. There was no time given me for deliberation ; for the following words left me no thought but of instant escape from the



hated house, which it had been my wretched but deserved lot to have entered.

‘As to that,’ said Thompson, in reply to a question which was asked in a low voice, ‘I can’t undertake to say: I’m thinking the job will be for the madhouse people—yes, I doubt ’twill be put on that score.’ The noble lord has promised to make me comfortable for life, and I’ll soon let him know what I understand by that. But before I give up my old trade, we must finish this here business.’

‘Ay, ay,’ cried his companions, ‘let’s hear about that.’

‘Why, Hall and Walker are to be kept here until further orders. Young Hopeful is to be had away to Justice Butler’s, we taking care to remember us that he is a sprig of nobility, and must be treated accordingly; but on no account must we suffer him to be out of our sight after he leaves his room.’

“Restraint on my personal liberty was at this moment of all ideas the most terrific. With noiseless steps I advanced to

the street-door—found it open—and assuming such an air of composure as I hoped would screen me from observation, I hurried away from those who were left as my guards.

“ Having thus, my friend, most fully detailed to you the circumstances which led me to the abandonment of my friends, relations, and native country, I will neither pain or weary you by a recital of the events which have occurred to me since. One passage only in my life’s sad page I would yet wish to explain to you; but I have already consumed the time which has been allowed me to write this long, very long letter; and I have reason to believe the reverend person to whom I shall intrust it, is not unacquainted with the circumstance to which I allude. I shall furnish him with such evidence of my innocence of the charges for which I am confined, as I cannot doubt will, with your assistance, speedily relieve me. In the mean time, I will endeavour to arrange some plan for my future course. The

world indeed is all before me; but where to choose my place of rest, if place of rest there be for me, is a most perplexing subject. Yet I have now an object for which I am willing to live—even to prepare to die; and though the ways I must walk appear to be dark and intricate, there is a still, small voice, never heard before, which whispers me, that His outstretched arm is extended towards me. I will endeavour to cherish this blessed belief, and, under its influence, make another effort to bear up against that current which has so often swept me away, and dashed me on rocks, and covered me in quicksands.

“Adieu, my excellent, my beloved friend! I will write to you again ere I leave this place, if I am permitted to leave it alive.”



CHAPTER IV.  
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“ Behold before thine eyes the solemn, open’d grave,
A monitor to thee: permit its teachings
To penetrate thy heart, and deep impress
The thought of death upon thy active mind.”

WHILE Mr. Scott was reading the letter, the unhappy writer remained with his arms folded on his breast, silently watching the effect which it produced. Mr. Scott’s countenance gave evidence that he did not read it unmoved.—“ I would gladly, sir,” said he, “ do your pleasure in the delivery of this, or of any other document you may choose to intrust me with; but is not the person to whom it is addressed an alien from his father’s house? Is not George Berkley in England?”

“ He is now at Berkley Park,” said Percy (for we must still use that name, seeing that in the letter which has just

been read, he has omitted the mention of his own or the title of his brother, though a reader of novels can be at no loss to supply either the one or the other)—“ Mr. George Berkley,” said he, “ is at Berkley Park ; he arrived there within the week, or my information has deceived me.— It is asking much,” he added, observing Mr. Scott made no reply—“ it is asking much to require you to take such a ride ; but only your arm, dear sir, is held out to me, and wretched and wrecked creature that I am, it must sustain my whole weight, or I sink.”

“ You greatly mistake the cause of my silence,” said Mr. Scott, much affected ; “ I count nothing of the distance. When I offered to serve you to the full extent of my poor ability, I promised nothing more than I meant, with perfect sincerity of heart, to perform. But your friend, should I find him, will require much information.”

“ And you will have little to give,” said Percy. “ I understand you, sir ; you are entitled to my fullest confidence, and you

shall have it.—At the time I left my country, George Berkley was not in England. Whether he ever obtained any knowledge of the horrid circumstances, the particulars of which I have detailed to him, I know not. Supposing, however, that any thing of that mysterious affair was known to him, I deemed it my part to give him a full explanation, before I could make any claim on his former friendship. This, as I hope, I have done. To excite his pity, by a recital of the woes incident to the adventurer, who, nursed in the lap of luxury and ease, is turned adrift into the world without friends and without a profession, formed no part of my object in writing the letter now in your hand. How freshly has it recalled all that is connected with my departure from England to my memory !”

“ I shall listen with the deepest interest,” said Mr. Scott ; “ and I pray you to take up the thread of your narration from the moment you left the Cross Keys in Clerkenwell.”

“ When I left the vile house you mention,” said Percy, “ I proceeded without molestation (though my fears made me imagine that many a look of suspicion and mistrust was cast on me) towards Hatton-Garden, down which I took my way with hasty steps, until I reached Holborn. Here I entered the first coach that offered, and directed it to be driven to the Minorities.

“ To be at the further end of the city from those who I doubted not would be immediately in pursuit of me, was my first object. The fear of a madhouse mastered every other feeling ; and the hint of the thieftaker had been fully sufficient so to alarm my confused, agitated, and nervous senses, that already the dark room, the straw, the strait-jacket, nay, whips and chains, were present to my view ; and to fly from them and my country became my fixed determination.

“ In the Minorities I proposed to dispose of my watch, which, as well as the chain and seals, was of considerable value. You

will naturally wonder, considering the place and the company I had escaped from, that I should have retained these articles; but the eyes of those in whose hands I had placed myself were fixed on richer spoils; and harrowed up as I was at the moment by fear and anguish of heart, I felt my cheek tinged with yet another shame, as the reflection came over me, that my person and property were considered as sacred from their touch, because a bond of union was by them supposed to exist between us—a bond, the ties of which were to be connected by the blood of my brother!

“On entering the coach, I had immediately drawn up the blinds, and endeavoured to form some plan for my further course; but at every delay from the throng of coaches at the several passes, at the rattling of every carriage which followed me, I was so convulsed with fear, lest I should be overtaken, and forced to submit to the restraint which I so surely believed would be put on my liberty, that when the coach-

man, having reached the turn from High-street into the Minories, desired to know where I would be set down, I was still unresolved what to do, and unable to give him an answer. After a few moments' hesitation, I summoned resolution enough to alight; and paying him the fare—'Can you direct me to a pawnbroker?' said I.

'Is it a pawnbroker you want?' said he; 'well, there's a plenty of 'em here;' and he pointed to a shop which I entered. A well-dressed man, who appeared to be its master, was examining the contents of a small trunk. This examination was watched with the utmost attention by a person, whose weather-beaten features, rough hands, and round shoulders, indicated the seaman; but his dress was not that of a common sailor; and I directly and rightly conjectured that he might be the master of some merchantman.

'You shall have the watch, sir,' said the shopman, 'for the contents of this trunk and five guineas.'

‘Overhaul them papers agin, mister, will you?’ said the seaman.

‘I have glanced over them,’ he was answered, ‘and I see the articles cost you more than the price of the watch, which, as I told you, was thirty-five guineas; but you must be sensible the articles are out of my line, and I must dispose of them to disadvantage. Thirty guineas is the utmost I could allow.’

‘Thirty devils!’ said the seaman peevishly, as he shut and locked the trunk. ‘Thirty guineas for what cost me fifty pounds not three days ago! Howsoever, I must go further, if I fare worse.’

‘I am sorry we can’t deal,’ said the shopman. ‘Suppose you take this watch, handing one; you shall have it for twenty-five, and then I will pay you five, which will probably answer your purpose better.’

“The seaman examined it with an air of perplexity, and at length exclaimed—‘Shiver my topsails, no; I’ll never fetch up that fashion neither. Thirty-five gui-

neas was gived me to purchase a watch, and I can't go back to New-York without one at that price. So here goes for another market.'

"During this conversation, I had waited in silence, considering in what manner I should offer my own watch for sale; but as the man spoke of returning to New-York, a thought struck me, that an opportunity offered, of which I determined instantly to avail myself. Asking for a trifling article, which I hastily purchased, I followed the person with the trunk, who I did not doubt was an American shipmaster. I overtook him just as he was entering another shop.—'Will you allow me to speak one word to you, sir?' said I.

'If it's a short one, friend,' said he; 'for I'm in a hurry. Time and tide—you understand me.'

'May I not ask if you are of New-York, and if you are about to return there?'

'I am of New-York, and do mean to return there, God willing.'

'When do you sail?' said I eagerly.

‘ This very day, unless I lose the tide by answering your questions.’

‘ Take me with you, sir,’ I cried, with an emphasis which plainly shewed how much I feared a refusal, ‘ and this watch, with its chain and seals, worth twice thirty-five guineas, shall be the price of my passage.’

‘ So, so,’ said he, as he held his trunk under one arm, while he put his finger to the side of his nose—‘ here’s bin some hair-trigger work, I doubt—some morning reckoning of last evening’s accounts. Well, when wine’s in wit’s out.’ Then compressing his lips as considering what further to say—‘ Young man,’ said he, ‘ come over the way ; there’s a public-house.’

“ I followed him.—‘ And now let me hear your offer agin,’ said he, as we entered an unoccupied room.

‘ I offer you this watch, chain, and seals, as the price of my passage to New-York.’

“ He took the watch, which he critically examined ; handed it back to me ; replaced

the trunk under his arm, and was striding towards the door, when I exclaimed—
‘Consider one moment, sir, to what a loss you must be exposed, if you barter the contents of your trunk.’

“Again he put the trunk on the table.—‘I can’t see your cloven foot,’ said he, ‘but I believe you are the devil, for none but he could tempt me so. You say true—I must part with them for less than half their value to me, and I must disappoint my poor——’ I thought he dashed a tear from his eye, but he assumed a firmer tone as he said, after a long pause—‘I will take your offer; for “needs must when somebody drives”—you understand.’

“I instantly placed the watch in his hand, saying, as I did so—‘And now farewell all that can remind me of better days.’

“The expression, it appeared, was not lost on the seaman, for he said, with an air of condolence, as he took up his trunk, which seemed so much the object of his care—‘Cheer up, cheer up, man; things

mayn't be so bad as ye think. But let's be off; my boat waits at the Tower Stairs. The watch was the last article, and a dear one it may prove after all. Young man,' said he, seizing my shoulder with his disengaged hand, 'wast ruined by gaming?'

'I was.'

'And drinking?'

'I was.'

'Then give us your hand: "birds of a feather——" you understand—. Bill, pull round to the step here—lay the trunk in the stern-sheets.—Now get aboard.' I entered the boat, and left, as I believe, my native land for ever.

"But I weary you, sir, by the minuteness with which I relate the circumstances of my departure, or rather, I should say, my escape from England. It has remained an impenetrable mystery to my friends up to this hour, how I eluded the immediate pursuit which was made after me.

"I have since learnt, by accident, that I was traced to the broker's shop in the Minories; but here every vestige of my

further course was lost. It was hoped that some clue might be afforded by the disposal of my watch, and it was not doubted I had provided myself with money by means of it; but this, you perceive, was defeated by the peculiarity of my bargain with the American captain. It is my present wish that you should have a full understanding of all my proceedings; and it is therefore that I am thus circumstantial."

Mr. Scott was about to express an assurance of his undiminished interest in Percy's story, when the gaoler entered, to inform him that all things were now ready, and that they were about to proceed to the grave.

"I wish," said Mr. Scott, "that you could accompany me."

"It is my most earnest desire," said Percy. "I would wish to have all that relates to the end of that wretched old man indelibly impressed on my mind.—I know nothing of prison rules, Mr. Lock."

The gaoler appeared confused, and at a loss how to reply.

“Nay,” said Percy, “if ’tis contrary to rule——”

“It is not *that*,” said the gaoler—“and I hardly know how to go about mentioning the thing ; but there’s been a bad mistake made.”

“Speak out freely,” said Percy—“I will take no offence at what you may say. What’s the mistake?”

“Why then, sir,” said the gaoler, “the long and short of the matter is just this : you are free to go to the burial, or any where else you like ; for I must say there’s bin a bad mistake made.”

“How ? What mistake ?” said Percy quickly.

“Why, when you was taken up at the General Greene, they were only after Cogwell and Blaney ; but you put yourself in, and brought yourself in guilty and the like, and so they thought they had best have you along. But here’s Mr. Stewart the sheriff ; he’s in a monstrous pucker about it ; and he’s down with the agers, else he’d bin here himself to see you right-

ed. They say he's got a letter from lawyer Courtal about you, that's run him clean distracted."

The revulsion of feeling, which this disclosure occasioned in the heart of the unfortunate young man, was so great and so sudden, that he was for some moments entirely overcome by his emotions. At length he grasped with energy the hand of the minister, saying—"Teach me, sir—teach me to be thankful for the mercies shewn me!"

"To be thankful for his mercies," said Mr. Scott, "is the gift of God. The thankful and softened heart is ever contrite and repentant—contrite for past offences, and prayerful to be preserved from future transgressions. And these are feelings which come not but by the grace of God, working in us to will and to do his good pleasure. But let us now proceed: I perceive we are waited for."

We have neglected to mark the time; but the day had passed away, and the sun was setting, as the little group which at-

tended the remains of the old gamester reached a retired spot behind the gaoler's garden, which had been selected for their resting-place.

The attendants were few in number, but their characters were strongly marked. There was seen the tavern-keeper—cautious and cunning, temperate, and mindful of his family's welfare, yet the active dispenser of the bane he avoids himself, and the immediate cause of that ruin to the families of his neighbours from which he guards his own. He has locked up his bar, to attend the funeral of his old customer, and the loiterers in his piazza have in consequence agreed to accompany him.—Here is the only heir of a rich, grinding, avaricious planter: he is adding field to field, and barn to barn, driving his wretched slaves to the utmost point of exertion which human nature is able to bear, in order to increase his wealth, and he is breeding up his son to batten and wallow in it. Already the young gentleman takes his daily way to the tavern; and that which is

most foully got, will be most vilely spent. Here is a spendthrift of somewhat greater note. He is of the fraternity of those who blow the horn; and though it is not the hunting season, rides about from tavern to tavern with his twenty couple of dogs; his credit begins to fail; and being booked in all the bars of higher renown, he plays off those airs of consequence on mine host of the Plough which he dares not shew at other places.—There are also two tall fellows in buckskin pantaloons, who ride bay geldings, and are proper fellows of their hands. They will run a quarter, or shoot at a mark, or heel a chicken, with any man in the country.—Here is a man who came mounted on a fat mare, with a colt by her side. His hard, severe features, have contracted an habitual scowl, and bespeak the consequential overseer. He has tasked the miserable slaves who are under his command, and ventures to recreate himself by riding up to the tavern; for the blue cowskin in his hand is sufficient security to his employer that his work will

not be neglected.—In the background of this group of worthies may be seen the bloated faces and red eyes of those who have abandoned their shops and farms, and now linger about the tavern in the hope of being treated, having no longer the means to treat themselves.

In deep contrast with these uninterested and stupid starers, stood the tall form of Percy. The graceful symmetry of his person appeared still more conspicuous from his neglected dress ; whilst the bright beaming of his eye, softened but not diminished by grief, was chastened by an expression of awe, and newly-awakened feelings of devotion, at the solemn ceremony he was about to witness.

Nor must we omit the mention of Ben Lock the gaoler, and his family : he was greeted with many significant nods and winks from the circle of his late associates ; but he gave no heed to them ; and when not engaged in the necessary duties of the moment, took his station by the side of his wife, and seemed to have no eyes but for

her and his children—no ears but for the words of the minister. The poor woman's feelings at this public manifestation of change in her husband's deportment, were scarcely repressed by the circumstances of the time and place. She pressed close to his side, and threw on her little family a look too expressive of thankfulness and hope to be mistaken.

It had been Mr. Scott's intention to do no more on this occasion than to perform the regular funeral service; but as he glanced his eye round on the little auditory, and thought how fast they were hastening to an end not less lamentable than that of the poor creature, who, unloved, unhonoured, and unwept, was now to have his body consigned to the dust, of which it first was made, his soul was moved within him.—“Alas!” said he, “though they, like the deaf adder, would, 'tis but too certain, hear not the voice of the charmer, charm he ever so wisely, yet here is a scene which must speak to their out-

ward as well as intellectual senses. It may move some of them to prepare to meet their God."

The coffin was rested at the head of the grave, on two chairs; and as preparation was made to lower it down, the minister waved his hand.—"Delay a few moments," he said.

Mr. Scott had never attempted what is called extempore preaching. He had gone through the routine of his parochial duties with all the regularity which could have been expected from a man subject to such fits of abstraction of mind as we have represented as incident to our truly worthy friend. He had ever been ready to preach in season; that is, when, after having gone through the morning or evening service, according to the rubric, he stood in his pulpit, with his sermon open before him. But, until the last night, he had never attempted to address any number of persons, however small, without previous preparation. The effects he had produced on that occasion greatly encouraged him. He

felt that there was no longer “a lion in the way,” and he stepped boldly forward.—“I desire you all,” said he, “to look on that coffin, ere it descends into the grave, which is now open to receive it. There it will moulder into dust, with the body which it contains, until the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised. Look on it, my friends! how awful the consideration! yet a few moments, and the earth will be heaped over it, and that pale ray of the setting sun, which now plays upon it, is the last light that will ever beam upon that narrow house. There has not, perhaps, been a moment of time for five thousand years, but what has sunk some one or other to the mansions of the dead. The greatest number of mankind beyond comparison have sunk to this; and do you hope to escape? ‘No,’ you will all answer, ‘we do not expect to escape; but we have much time laid up for us; and our souls may yet take their ease.’ Oh, my friends! who was it that made this tremendous reply to even such a reasoner as yourselves:

‘thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee?’ If you had any security that you will live to see that sun rise, which has but this moment set, it might be something in your favour; but you have not. You do not know that the principles of death are not working in you; and that, notwithstanding the seeming vigour of your constitutions, you may not be laid as low as this, before his rising beams shall gild the eastern skies.

“Now, I ask you, and I call on you to answer me in his name whose humble minister I am; I ask you by your hopes of heaven, and your fears of hell; I ask you with this fearful object before your eyes, with this open grave yawning beside you—are you making any preparation for the moment, the uncertain moment, when you must enter yours? Is there a more awful question? Yes, there is. Are you making preparation for the moment when all that are in the grave shall hear the voice of their Lord, and shall come forth—they that have done good to the resurrection of

life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation? My poor brethren, I do not judge you; but yet the tree is known by its fruit; and I am forced to fear *you are not*. Ought I then to leave you, until I warn you, that unless you repent, you must all likewise perish; that is, unless you repent in time, for, mark me, the alternative is not proposed to you whether you will repent or not—whether you will be pensive and serious, or jovial and gay—whether you shall think upon gloomy and alarming subjects, or continue to delight yourselves in your own vain imaginations, and to run your own ruinous courses. This, let me tell you, is not at all the state of the case; for you *must* repent—you *must*, whether you will or not. It is utterly unavoidable; *repent you must*, either on earth or in hell. Putting it off does not make you rid of it; and once more I say—you must spend your *time* or your *eternity* in repentance. Now, choose you at this awful moment—make your selection—will you take the hopeful, to-

lérable, medicinal repentance of this life, or the intolerable, unprofitable, despairing repentance of hell?"

It does not come within the scope of our plan to say what effect Mr. Scott produced by this appeal. 'Tis but too probable that some mocked, and others might, for aught we know, determine to hear him again of this matter.

The grave was filled up, and the persons who had assembled round it departed, except the minister and Percy; the latter of whom had stood, from the moment the first earth was thrown on the coffin, with his arms folded on his breast, absorbed, as appeared by his countenance, in deep and solemn meditation. Mr. Scott forbore, for some minutes, to disturb him; but seeing that he took no notice of him, and that he did not change his posture, he at length took him by the arm, saying—
“Come, sir, shall we go?”

“Go!” said Percy, rousing from the reverie in which he had been plunged—
“go where?”

“Why, to the tavern,” said the minister, without noticing Percy’s wild and confused manner; “we must stay there to-night.”

“And where to-morrow?” said Percy, in a hollow, stifled voice, as he turned away and walked towards the rails of the enclosure, against which he leaned.

“That is a question,” said Mr. Scott, who followed, and kindly took his hand—“that, my friend, is matter for our consideration. I hope you will this evening favour me with the remaining part of your story. You must bring it down to the moment”—(here a faint smile played on the minister’s face, and Percy started at the intelligence it implied)—“to the moment I first saw you; and then I shall be more able to offer my poor advice.”

“Alas, sir,” said Percy, “my situation is even worse than that of the melancholy poet, who complained of finding his warmest welcome at an inn. I have not the means of making myself welcome.”

Here Mr. Scott began to fumble in his pockets, exclaiming at intervals, as he drew his unsuccessful hand first from one and then from another—"Surely I can't have lost it!" Again he searched his pockets, and finding it fruitless, cried out, with an air of much vexation and perplexity—" 'Tis gone, as sure as my name is Marmaduke!"

"Is your loss considerable?" said Percy, who had watched these movements in silence.

"Why, no—yes—that is, I—really I don't know," said Mr. Scott, in much confusion. "To tell the truth, I never looked——" leaving Percy to make what he could of this contradictory answer.

We must plainly tell the reader what at the time we forgot to mention, namely, that the conference held at Hopewell Hall, between Mr. Scott and Mrs. Belcour, ended, on the part of the lady, by her putting a bank note into the gentleman's hand, for contingent expences; for she rightly conjectured, that as the worthy

minister had left farmer Jolly's in such haste, he had in all likelihood departed without the *fee*, or *honorarium*, which was justly his due for the service he had performed.

But to return. It was not the least of Mr. Scott's distress on this occasion, that he could not explain to Percy the nature of his loss, without the danger of entering on, or at the least, exciting suspicions of that which he was solemnly bound to conceal. Mr. Scott was not fertile in expedients, and quietly gave up the matter, acknowledging that his pockets were as empty as those of his unfortunate companion. From the awkward dilemma in which this circumstance placed him, he was relieved for the present by the now friendly gaoler, who knowing that Percy was entirely without money, and that the parsons to the south were not in those days always provided with cash (if the case be mended with them, I shall greatly rejoice thereat), ventured to offer, for their night's accommodation, the spare chamber

which Percy had occupied through the day. His offer was gladly accepted. Such a repast as the house afforded, was quickly prepared for these honoured guests, which having been thankfully partaken of, and all things being cleared away, Mr. Scott renewed his request, and Percy thus continued the narration of his adventures.

CHAPTER V.
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With thee, my bark, I'll swiftly go  
Athwart the foaming brine,  
Nor care what land thou bear'st me to,  
So not again to mine !  
Welcome, welcome, ye dark blue waves !  
And when you fail my sight,  
Welcome, ye deserts and ye caves—  
My native land—good night !

BYRON.

*The Benevolent Tar.*

“ I BROUGHT down my sad story, I believe, sir,” Percy began, “ to the moment when I entered the boat of the American captain at the Tower Stairs. It was on the fifth day from that on which this last-mentioned circumstance occurred, that I awoke out of a deep sleep, wholly ignorant of the place where I lay, or what had befallen me.

“ Slowly and by degrees my recollection

returned. ‘Powers of mercy!’ I exclaimed, ‘am I then in a madhouse? Is this darksome place, this horrid cell, to be my future abode?’ A groan of anguish and despair burst from my heart. I feared to move, lest I should hear the rattle of the chain with which I doubted not I was bound; I forbore to cry out, lest my keeper should approach, armed with his whips and scourges. Whilst I thus lay, suffering all the torments which the full belief of the reality of all these horrors might be supposed to inflict, I heard some person moving near me, and words like these were sung in a screeking, boyish voice, with such occasional interruptions and soliloquies as indicated that the singer was occupied in the arrangement of some articles that he could not readily lay his hands on :

‘ We eat salt beef

For our relief,

Salt beef and biscuit bread.

Dern that old Wilkins, if he an’t stowed away all the goose-pie in that old weather-

beaten bread-basket of his! and he'll lay it on me, an old hocus—and I shall get tokey about it.

While you on shore,  
With a many more,  
So daintily are fed.'

"Here he seemed to reach some article by a spring from the floor, which brought a clatter of plates, knives, forks, cans, and spoons about him. 'Scaldings!' he cried, and went on with his song as he gathered them up.

'The topsail yard  
Is our safeguard,  
The safeguard of our lives.'

"Suddenly he ceased his singing, and coming on tiptoe towards me—'By the linkings,' said he, 'but I think as how he's dead, for I was dreaming all the after-watch, that I seed him in a white sheet, perched up on the main-topgallant yard—who but him?'

"By this time the truth began to dawn on me, like the first glimmerings of a misty morning. Still my thoughts were



too much confused to allow me to speak. Presently the curtain (for something of that kind hung before me) was drawn back, and I beheld, for one moment, a small urchin of a boy, whose whole appearance was so peculiar, that I doubted if my imagination did not deceive me by the creation of some fantastic vision; for he no sooner perceived that I was awake, than he hurried away. In a few moments he returned, accompanied by another person, whose voice I thought I knew, but where, and when I had heard it, I could not so well remember.

‘Are you sure his eyes are open?’ he said.

‘I’m sure his starboard eye is open,’ returned the boy; ‘I couldn’t see the larboard eye on him.’

“The man approached cautiously to the place where I lay, drew back the curtain, and I at once knew the American captain.

‘How fare ye, how fare ye, man?’ said he, in a tone which he meant to be very

gracious ; ‘ what cheer ? Odds bodlikins but I’m glad to see you awake. Idad, I was afraid the sharks would ha’ got you at last.’

“ With difficulty I mustered strength to say—‘ Tell me, for mercy’s sake, where I am, and what is to be my fate !’

‘ As to the where you are,’ returned the captain, ‘ you are in the chops of the Channel—the Lizard Point bearing north north-west, one half west, distant about four leagues. As to what’s to be your fate, I can’t get any observation as yet to work that question by.’

“ The tones of his voice, for I did not understand his words, assisting my recollection, I exclaimed, with a feeling of indescribable horror — ‘ Gracious Powers ! then it was no dream !’

‘ That is best known to yourself,’ said the captain : ‘ all I can say in respect of you is, that from the time you got into my boat, you seemed to have no more use for your senses ; for thof you was in such a storm of a hurry to get off, we no sooner pulled away from the stairs, than you flat-

tened away to a dead calm, and when we came alongside, you were in a swoon, or some such matter. Old Wilkins, my mate, was point blank against going to sea with you, for there was no more sign of life in you than in a dried cod. In a dreadful quandary I was, that's the truth of it: but there was no help for it then—so we hoisted you in, laid you in that same birth, and made sail. You came to after a long time, and a burning hot fever you had.—Bill, you skulking dog, what are you after in that locker? go and make the gentleman some coffee.' He waited until the boy left the cabin.—' That young devil's limb is as 'cute as a kingfisher. You talked of some strange matters, mister; but I won't go for to bring up such things now. I was forced to keep his lugs out of hearing; and I expect you had a baddish time of it; for we had no sooner got through the Downs, than the wind came off the land in such squalls, that the foot-rope of the mainsail parted, and the sail was split to rags before you could say



peas: then, to mend the matter, one of the straps of the main dead-eyes was carried away; and so, what with that and one thing or other, I was forced to be always on deck. The gale continuing, we have stood down Channel under double-reefed courses. I looked in upon you as often as I could, until your mad tantrums went off. For the last forty-eight hours you have been asleep.'

"As the captain ceased speaking, I clasped my hands in silent agony. This long, uninterrupted sleep had restored my mind to its natural strength, and I had waked with a dreadful capacity to feel all the horrors of my situation. The excitement produced by the necessity of immediate exertion, the confusion occasioned in my mind by the quick succession of events, had, in the first instance, rendered me incapable of forming any just estimate of the weight of the blow by which I was crushed.

"I could not now, as on former and lighter occasions, fly to scenes and practices

of dissipation, in order to drown reflection; reflection now could not be put aside, and the consequences of my conduct rose to view in all their deformity.

“ Like a crushed and wounded reptile, I lay helpless and hopeless, thrown on the compassion of strangers, in the cabin of a mean vessel, which was swiftly bearing me from my native land.

“ Think you, reverend sir, that I did not earnestly and sincerely repent of my sins? Yes, sir, I did: because they had made me a wanderer from my country—estranged me from my friends—turned my only brother’s heart, if not his hand against me; and, above all, loaded me with the imputation of a foul crime, of which, though innocent, I could never hope to throw off.

“ I shall feel it very difficult, I fear, sir, to make myself understood; but in all this, as it appears to me, I mourned the *consequences*, but not the *corruption* of sin: that is, did not grieve because I was unworthy, but because my unworthiness had

lost me that good, upon which, now that it *was* lost, I began to set such value. This, sir, you will tell me was not true repentance."

"No!" replied the minister: "it was not repentance unto life, for it was not repentance towards God."

"My own course," said Percy, "affords ample proof that it was not."

After a short pause, he thus continued. —"The good-natured seaman, for such he proved to be, perceiving that I was greatly disturbed, and also that I was too weak for conversation, forbore to press it on me.

'I will have a dish of coffee for you,' said he. 'I myself must be on deck: it blows a gale now, and the clouds look so heavy in the western board, that I'm thinking we shall have a rough time of it.'

"The boy soon after entered with the coffee, by which I was so much revived, as to be able to view with some attention the grotesque little figure who brought it. His features were so small as to be almost



infantile ; but his face was not only tanned and freckled by sun and wind, but he had already acquired that look of careless hardihood, which is so peculiar to the lads of the fore-castle. I cannot say, in the words of the old sea song, that

‘ His trowsers were like driven snow,’

for they were literally covered and stiffened with tar and grease ; but the long-quartered shoes, check shirt, blue jacket, as well as the canvas-covered hat, announced the sailor, though he was not four feet high.

“ To the inquiry, whether I would have more coffee, I replied in the negative, and he began to replace the things he had used on a kind of shelf. Whilst thus employed, he was called, and an order given which I did not understand ; but he hastily closed up the cabin windows, and I was left in perfect darkness.

‘ My good lad,’ said I, ‘ why is this ?’

‘ Why because,’ said he, ‘ the wind’s shifted, and it’s going to blow like old

Harry ; and we shall have to go to boxing it again, and I'm putting in the dead-lights. Shall I light the lantern ?'

" I desired he would do so.

" It was long ere he returned. In the mean time I could perceive there was no small bustle on the deck. I could hear the trampling of feet, and now and then the voice of the master, high, even above the noise of the blast.

" When the little sailor returned, he jumped upon the table, which was lashed to the cabin floor, and hung to the ceiling a large iron-bound lantern, which threw a pale, flickering glare around, and increased by its melancholy creaking, at every roll of the ship, the dreariness of the place and hour.

' I'd have come before,' said he, ' but I was wanted on deck ;' adding, with a sly and significant expression of countenance, ' I guess you don't like to be in the dark.'

' Does it blow hard ?' said I, not noticing his observation.

' You may say that,' he replied, twist-

ing off a piece of tobacco from a roll and putting it into his mouth—‘you may say that—pigs and live lumber are all afloat in the lee scuppers—my eyes! but how she walks!’

“The boy was again called, and I was left alone. Weak, sick, desponding, grieved at the past, reckless, or rather despairing of the future, I lay ruminating on my forlorn condition, when the increased motion of the vessel, which now became very violent, gave me reason to suppose it quite probable that my griefs would soon be buried in the deep.

“To be hurried thus unannointed, unannealed, with all my imperfections on my head, into the presence of an angry Judge, formed no part (sinner that I was) of my care; but thus to perish, and leave no trace behind me—to live in the remembrance of all who ever loved me, but as a vagabond, a murderer, was agony not to be endured. I endeavoured to raise myself up, and was attempting to get out of the berth, when again the cabin-boy entered.



‘Vast! vast there!’ cried he; ‘you’d best lay still in the birth, or you’ll get cap-sized against the corner of the table, or some such matter. It’s as much as the best of us can do to keep our legs.’

‘Does the captain,’ I asked, ‘apprehend danger?’

‘Anan!’ said he, staring at me.

‘Does the captain think the ship will be able to outlive the storm?’

‘The storm!’ said the little fellow, twitching up his trowsers with one hand, whilst he put another quid into his mouth with the other—‘you don’t call this a storm! it’s only a heavy blow or so. Why, man, she likes it. If you could only get up the gangway for a minute or two now, to see how she licks it in at the weather chess-trees, and cants it over the lee yard-arm, ’twould do your heart good. Then, by the hokey, you’d split your sides a laughing to see one of your old English bull-dogs, a three-decker belike, that’s grabbing it to windward, and rolling gunnel in at every surge.’

“ The gale continued with unabated violence for two days, during which time the captain’s presence was constantly required on deck, for the ship was badly manned and found. He lost no opportunity, however, of coming down to inquire after and to comfort me. The little cabin-boy was most assiduous to render me all the assistance in his power ; though he frequently hinted that old daddy Wilkins, as he called the mate, considered me as the cause of the rough weather ; ‘ and mayhap,’ he would add, ‘ he’s not so much out—but blow high, blow low, I’m against heaving you overboard, any way.’ ”

“ It was evident I was regarded with no favourable eye by the little seaman ; nor was the suspicion of my having fled from the punishment due to some heinous crime confined to him ; for when the weather became favourable, and the captain at leisure to converse with me, he frankly, though with a delicacy of feeling not to have been looked for from his blunt manner, told me I had used expressions during

my delirium, which, combined with the circumstances attending our first interview, made him anxious on my account to hear my reasons for quitting England in the hurried and clandestine manner in which I did.—‘ I owe you,’ he added, ‘ a better turn than you think of. I never look at that trunk, but what I’m thinking how I can serve you ; and when we get to New-York, if so be that you want friends, and such a poor fellow as me can do any thing to give you a lift, I’d be glad to know there was nothing about you which should hinder.’

“ The kindness of his manner, rough as it was, soothed my lacerated feelings ; and willing to have some one human being interested for me, I gave him the same minute recital of my sad story which I have given you, down to the moment I met him at the pawnbroker’s.

“ The captain was an open-hearted, unsuspicious man, and he gave that instant and implicit credence to my story which



its truth deserved, and which it is the peculiar attribute of truth to demand.

‘I pitied you,’ said he, cordially shaking me by the hand—‘I pitied you when I thought you a much worse fellow than I find you are. But odds life, man, you should have thrown your head to the wind, instead of scudding under bare poles before it—you’d have rode out the gale, depend on it. But it’s too late to think of that—you must stand on now, come what will of it: howsomever, story for story is fair play. Do you remember this here trunk?’

‘I remember,’ said I, ‘’tis the same you had with you at the pawnbroker’s.’

‘Well, it may be some comfort to you to know, there’s as big fools in the world as yourself; and so I’ll tell you about it. You must know I ventured all my scrapings in this voyage, and it’s sunk—gone to nothing. But I did for the best, and there’s an end on it. Now, you see, a young gentleman, a friend of mine, gave me thirty-five guineas to buy him a watch (Here the poor man’s countenance began

to shew marks of confusion). The ship was hauled out in the stream, ready to sail; and I went ashore to purchase the watch, and bring off that trunk. You must know I had fixed matters, and there was to be no questions asked. Well, sir, I went ashore, and meeting three or four old friends, needs must be, that we must have a bowl of punch. They say, one glass is enough, two is too much, and three is not half enough; and so it turned out. But what will you have of it? They had me away to a gambling-house. I saw heaps of gold, to be had for the winning. I was going back to my poor wife and family worse off than when I left them. I am no gambler; but I must needs try my luck. I had ten guineas of my own in my pocket. They soon went; and (his cheek, though browned by the rays of many a tropical sun, was suffused by a deep blush of scarlet, as he added) I began on the thirty-five—they followed the ten.

‘I have two daughters. They are milliners in Broadway; and strive hard, poor

things, to help us along. When I sailed for England, they made out to buy a bill of exchange of fifty pounds sterling, and this they sent to a lady, their acquaintance, in London, for some particular articles of finery in their line.' The idea of the injustice he had been so nearly forced to do persons so dear to him, quite overcame the tender-hearted seaman, and he wept as he went on—' I knew that my credit was a thousand times more to my poor girls than their fifty pounds' worth of finery for their shop, and—and so—but you know the rest.'

"This mutual confidence established a friendship between us, which the kind attentions of captain Thompson (for such was his name) tended every day to strengthen.

' I know,' said he, on the day we made land, ' that the poor accommodations you have had on the voyage are worth much less than thirty-five guineas. The watch I must deliver at that price; but I hold



myself in debt to you for ten—the chain and seals I return to you.’

“Many were the plans I had formed for my maintenance in the new country to which I was going; but how I was to subsist on my first arrival, had been the frequent subject of much perplexity.

‘I claim nothing, sir,’ said I; ‘and I can receive nothing of that sort. Yet if you will suffer me to have the protection of your roof for a few days——’

‘For just as many,’ he replied quickly, ‘as you may please to consider convenient and agreeable; so that point’s settled. For the rest, I’ll manage it my own way.’

“Nothing further passed on the subject; and arriving at New-York a few days after, I was introduced by the captain to his family. It consisted of his wife and the two daughters before mentioned. It is unnecessary, sir, to tire you by a relation of the various schemes which were suggested by the benevolent seaman for my advantage; suffice it to say, they all proved abortive; indeed, it must be ac-

known, most of them could only have entered the head of a man who knew only how to steer his own course when at sea. I had been already some days at his house: to subsist longer at the expence of this poor man's family, was not to be thought of. As the captain had received an offer, and was preparing to go to sea again, my immediate removal became absolutely necessary; and thus at length I found,

‘ That hungry ruin had me in the wind.’

“ With these melancholy reflections crowding on my mind, I was sitting, the evening before my intended departure, in the little shop kept by the captain's daughters, when a group of persons entered, who, from their conversation and purchases, it was easy to perceive were strolling players. They were nothing loth to communicate the plan of their intended movements, and I found that in a day or two they were to embark on an expedition to the more southern parts of the United States.

“ I had always been vain at what I con-

sidered my theatrical powers ; and this my vanity had not been a little increased by the plaudits I had frequently received in those nurseries for the public stage—private theatricals.

“ That ‘ to this complexion I must come at last,’ had often crossed my mind ; but, sunk as I was, there was something in the idea of my father’s son becoming a stroller, which I could not bear. Now the tyrant’s plea, of necessity, was at hand—and my resolution was taken.

“ Without signifying my intention, I continued to learn where he who appeared to be the manager might be found ; and not to delay on this abhorrent subject, I the next day made my proposals—exhibited my talents—and was accepted, as a most valuable acquisition to the company.

“ Leaving a letter, in which I expressed my warmest acknowledgments for their kindness, and sincerest wishes for their welfare, I quitted the family of the friendly captain, without mentioning my destination. It was best,” said Percy, after a



pause—"it was best, though it appeared ungrateful and unkind."

Mr. Scott did not notice the remark, and requested him to proceed.

"I then," continued Percy, "removed to the lodgings of my new associates, and on the following morning we left New-York in a packet-boat for one of the southern ports. It was on board this vessel that I became acquainted with the unfortunate person whose remains we have this evening committed to the grave. If in his life he was the instrument by which I was led to the attempted perpetration of an act, the recollection of which must ever cover me with shame and fill me with regret—yet, in witnessing his death, has a change been effected, by which I trust I shall be enabled to consider even life's greatest ill as a thing which passes away.

"His was a countenance which, once seen, was never forgotten; and I had even then an indistinct recollection that I had seen him before. Absorbed in perplexing anticipations and unavailing regret, I

should probably have little regarded him, but for the fixed and undissembled stare of surprise, and indeed astonishment, with which he regarded me, so different from the naturally composed, sly, and reserved expression of his features.

“ He appeared to have no connexion with, or knowledge of, the players, who no sooner found the vessel fairly under sail, than each individual seemed relieved of some particular source of uneasiness or fear, for they became as merry as grigs, laughed at every word that was spoken, and one less experienced than I was in the ways of the wicked, would have been deceived into the belief that they were happy. So was not I. I had learned to detect, under an air of gaiety and unconcern, the heart hardened indeed to every tender, generous, and virtuous emotion, but still writhing in anguish at a sense of its own unworthiness, and swelling, indignant, at the means by which it strove to forget that happiness was the reward of virtue, and misery of guilt.

“ Though I had long associated with persons fully as dissolute, yet I had hitherto considered them only as the instruments of my amusement—conducive to my pleasure, and subservient to my caprice. Bound to them by no tie of affection or interest, they were thrown off as often as disgust or satiety dictated a change ; for as the diseased stomach, whilst it rejects all solid and nutritious food, covets with unceasing restlessness a change in what is sickening and hurtful, so the depraved mind, having rejected that which is good, is never able to fix a steady aim even upon that which is bad ; and therefore most truly is it said, there is no friendship among the wicked.

“ These were not, I repeat, the most dissolute companions I had ever consorted with ; but I felt, that in joining myself to the band, I was really degraded to their level ; and their actions, manners, and conversation, became matters of moment to me.

“ Sick of their insipid jokes, their coarse



vulgarity, and disgusted even to loathing by their licentiousness, I soon separated myself from them, and was pacing the deck with sad and melancholy steps, when I was joined by the person I have since known as Cogwell. He made his advance to my acquaintance with much seeming modesty, and with all the deference to to which I should once have thought my rank entitled me. He appeared deeply versed in the ways of the world, and in apparent ignorance of my connexion with the players, gave so ludicrous, yet so strong a picture of the wretchedness and ignominy attending the life of a stroller, that I began to consider starvation itself as preferable to the profession I had chosen.

“ The voyage lasted four days, during which he continually increased my respect for his opinions, by the depth, originality, and sagacity of his observations.

“ Of the situation of the state to which we were going, he appeared to have particular knowledge, and gave me the most interesting and minute account of all the

families and persons of distinction belonging to it.

“ In particular, he dwelt on the wealth, the accomplishments, the beauty of the ladies in whose company you were when you first saw me. I will not spare myself, sir; no, I must not spare myself, though the thoughts of my abject unworthiness, contrasted with the virtues, the loveliness of——”

For one moment only he was unable to proceed, when making, as it seemed, a strong effort to regain his composure, he went on :

“ Cogwell was not a man of education or refinement, yet he was by no means destitute of the power of making himself interesting and agreeable. Unsuspicious of his purpose, I listened to his representations of the ladies of Rosemount, and particularly of——(I cannot speak her name,” said the unfortunate young man,) “ until my curiosity was excited to the highest pitch to see persons who could elicit such encomiums from such a man. In propor-

tion as I felt interested in the conversations of Cogwell, my dislike, nay abhorrence, increased towards that of the gang to which I belonged. Besides, my situation was not without other sources of unhappiness and vexation.

“The manager, having advanced me a small sum from the general stock, and taken my obligation for the performance of certain conditions, seemed to consider me as completely under his control, giving me also frequently to understand that strict attention to his orders would be expected. Nor was this all : in addition to the dislike with which it was evident the whole corps regarded me in consequence of my refusal to join in their orgies, I was honoured with the particular and undisguised hatred of the young man who, before my appearance amongst them, was in possession of all the first parts. These he was now to resign in my favour. As his enmity was natural, so his means of gratifying it were at hand, and he did not fail to use them.



“ Such was the state of my affairs, when we came in sight of the port to which we were bound; and ere I parted with my new acquaintance Cogwell, I had just determined to avail myself of his judgment and experience, as to the manner in which I might be relieved of the intolerable irksomeness of my situation with the players, when he himself desired a private conference with me.

“ Retiring to an unoccupied part of the vessel, he asked me abruptly—‘ If the profession of a strolling player was exactly that which my father, had he been alive, would have chosen for me?’

“ You cannot imagine, my dear sir, what emotion the mention of my father, in connexion with such a question, caused me. My face was crimsoned with shame and anguish, as I answered—‘ He would have chosen my death, had that been the alternative.’

‘ I am decidedly of that opinion,’ said he calmly. ‘ It is but a sorry trade for

the son of a baron of seventeen descents—that I must acknowledge.’

‘Then you know me!’ said I, starting back in astonishment.

‘Know you!’ he returned; ‘most surely I know you. ’Tis of no consequence to tell you when and where I saw you before. I am your countryman, and as such bound to assist you: yet you have another claim on me. I was born, sir, within a few miles of the princely seat of your ancestors. I knew your noble father from a boy. Often has he befriended me. One important service, in particular, I see that I have some means of repaying; and I will not lose the opportunity of shewing that gratitude to the son, which his exalted situation rendered it impossible I should manifest to the father.’

“I must hasten on, sir, or the night will not be long enough for my story.—This man tendered me his friendship, and I accepted it. The means he used to release me from my obligations to the players, I do not exactly know, though I

had subsequent reason to conjecture, that the representations he then made of my rank was the cause of some pleasantry, but much more mortification to me. It was not directly that I discovered my friend and patron to be a professed gambler, and most notorious swindler—not until he had wound his toils about me, and I was completely in his power. Then it was that the nefarious scheme of engaging the affections of a lady I had never seen, was proposed and pressed on me; and in evil hour did I consent to plot with sharpers and swindlers against her peace and happiness, whose welfare I have since felt I could die to secure.

“ I cannot say more, sir, on this most distressing subject than is barely necessary; yet I must remark, that so much are we the slaves of prejudice and the abuse of words, that whilst I felt debased and degraded as a strolling player, now that I was engaged in a far more dishonourable profession, that of a fortune-hunter, I was caressed and courted, and even



deceived myself for a time, with the belief that I deserved no less favour than I received.

“ It is not for such as I am to name the passion which mastered every other feeling in my bosom, and prevented the probable consummation of that villany, of which neither honour nor common honesty could prevent the attempt. I have no wish to endeavour to extenuate the atrocity of my conduct, by dwelling on the deplorable situation in which I was placed, and the snares by which I was entrapped. One reflection on the subject, and I have done. I had exacted from Cogwell an oath, binding him to secrecy on the subject of my real name, and the rank of my family. I meant to hold it as something of an equivalent in case of detection, to be offered to the insulted feelings of the lady. This oath I have reason to believe the unhappy man did not keep—at least so far as regards Mrs. Belcour. I can no otherwise account for the favour shewn me by

that lady. But what avails it now? I am a detected impostor; and as such, I must appear in their eyes, until the recollection of one so unworthy—but surely I may say, so repentant, shall fade away from their memory.”

Here he ceased; and Mr. Scott, thanking him for the confidence he had reposed in him, prevailed on him to endeavour to calm his long agitated feelings by the refreshment of sleep.

The unexpected turn in Percy's affairs, by delivering him from confinement, rendered Mr. Scott's journey to Berkley Park unnecessary; and as that had been effected without his assistance, to the execution of which his commission alone extended, he was greatly at a loss how to proceed without further orders. These he determined to seek. In the mean time he fortunately concluded to invite Percy to take up his present residence at the parsonage house—I say fortunately, for out of the hundred plans which presented themselves, this, as being most reasonable, was least

likely to have occurred to him—truly worthy man as he was.

This invitation was most thankfully accepted; and as though all difficulties were to vanish before Mr. Scott's unwonted presence of mind, the arrangement was no sooner made than a message arrived from the sheriff, lamenting the indisposition which prevented his offering, in person, his horses and servant to reconvey Mr. Percy to the place from whence he was taken, or wherever else his inclination or convenience might induce him to go.

The morning was little advanced when, after taking leave of Ben Lock and his family, Mr. Scott and Percy took up their line of march for the parsonage house: and as Hopewell Hall did not lie in a very contrary direction, the minister made no scruple to take his friend a somewhat circuitous route, to the end that he might hold a conference with his commanding officer as he passed along.



## CHAPTER VI.



Wrapt in amaze the stranger stood,  
Bereft of voice and power;  
Whilst she with equal wonder view'd  
Sir Eldred of the bower. *Old Ballad.*

LITTLE Jacob, the sheriff's boy, possessed a topographical knowledge of the country so far superior to Mr. Scott's, that the journey from the gaol to Hopewell Hall was considerably shorter than when travelled by that reverend gentleman alone.

Two hours and a half of moderate riding brought the party to a spot where the road branched off in two directions—one leading directly up to the Hall, which could now be seen through a long avenue of trees; the other winding round an enclosure which fenced the ample domains of colonel Hopewell.—“ I have some concerns,” said Mr. Scott, as they reach-

ed the place where the roads separated, "which will oblige me to stop for a short space of time at yonder mansion." And under the impression that Percy would consider him as reluctant to introduce him to the family, he added, in some confusion, "Shall I stand acquitted of rudeness, or unkindness, if I ask you to continue your course, at a slow pace, round this fence, until I shall have finished my business, and join you again at the further end of the park, for such it seems to be?"

Percy courteously acceded to the proposal, and insisted that the boy should bear him company; for he rightly imagined that his worthy friend would the more readily find the trysting-place, after leaving the house, by trusting to Jacob's headpiece rather than his own.

Mr. Scott went off at a round trot, repeating his promise of making all possible dispatch in his business, while Percy, being in no such haste to get to the place of appointment, left it to the sheriff's mare to decide on her rate of travelling.

The day was still so young as to be delightfully pleasant: an unusually heavy dew was still dripping from the trees; and as the road lay along the west side of the park, it was completely shaded by a continuous growth of the most majestic oaks and poplars. The rays of the sun were not yet too fervid for the lark, who, suspended in mid air, continued to carol his matin song. The mocking bird, that living panharmonicon of the grove, perched on the highest branches of the oak, poured forth the richest strains of varied melody. Those exquisitely beautiful little creatures, which appear to link the feathered to the insect tribe, round every graceful poplar, were seen humming under the blossom which hangs on the bough. Even the poor woodpecker, pecking the old hollow tree, seemed well to perform his part in this woodland concert, and to add not a little to this sweet assemblage of sylvan sounds.

The mind of our adventurer was, at this moment, peculiarly tuned to these charms



of nature. The loathsome and disgusting scenes with which alone he had lately been familiar, enabled him the more readily to yield his senses to the influence of the moment, and he had just repeated the following lines of a favourite poet—

“ Blows not a blossom on the breast of spring,  
Breathes not a gale along the bending mead,  
Trills not a soaring songster on the wing,  
But fragrance, health, and melody succeed,”

when his ear caught the notes of a distant horn; and as he reached the brow of the hill, over which the road passed, he beheld a hunting party dispersed through the valley which stretched far and wide below.

The commanding eminence on which he now was, enabled him to observe all their movements; and as the cover consisted of low brushwood, he could perceive the hounds completely spread over it—none were idle, yet not a sound was heard. Percy was reminded of a poet of very different complexion from the one he had last quoted :

“ ———— See how they range  
Dispers'd ; how busily this way and that  
They cross ; examining with curious nose  
Each likely haunt.”

He felt, however, little interested in viewing a scene in which he had formerly taken so much delight ; yet it became at the instant too animated to be disregarded :

“ ———— Hark ! on the drag he hears  
Their doubtful notes, preluding to a cry  
More nobly full, and swell'd with every mouth.”

How musical their tongues !—how wild the chorus fills ! What a crash that was, as they dashed into the thickest bushes ! See ! see ! the game has broke cover, and the hounds have caught view—

“ ———— Hark ! what loud shouts  
Reecho through the vale—he breaks away ;  
Shrill horns proclaim his flight—each straggling hound  
Strains through the copse to gain the distant pack.”

They were soon hid by the windings of the valley, and Percy pensively continued his course ; and but that at intervals he heard the distant thunder of the chase, he might have forgotten the circumstance.

He had not, however, rode more than a mile, when four of the sportsmen emerged from the wood on the unenclosed side of the road, and hastily approaching him, he who was foremost cried out—"Stop, my lord! stop, lord Umberdale!—This is the place—he will go in here, I warrant him. I told you so, gentlemen, when you insisted on placing the ladies at the Huckleberry Gap. There he comes, by all that's lovely!"

All eyes were turned in the direction from whence, through every dark recess, the forest thundered, and, in a few moments, a noble buck bounced on an open glade which lay between the wood and the park.

The vociferous acclamations of the sportsmen evinced the tumultuous joy they took in the spectacle. Such expressions were heard as—"Mind Galloper, how he leads!"—"Touchwood is close after him though."—"Fifty dollars on Galloper."—"A hundred on Touchwood."—"Did you



ever see dogs run in such style !—‘ What a head they carry ! not a shuffler or skirter among them.’—‘ They are all up.’—‘ Ah, Touchwood, you are beat—Gallopers tops that brush fence first.’—‘ See there ! see there ! how they all take it !’—‘ The fence cracks with their weight—so many jump at once.’

The gentleman who had addressed Percy as lord Umberdale, was too much engaged to perceive, or at least notice, the mistake he had made ; and now the buck, his nostrils distended, his eyeballs glaring, and his sides covered with foam, reached the enclosure of the park, the dogs close following at his haunches. He made his last effort, and sprung the fence ; but the dogs alighted on the side with him at the same moment, and he was surrounded. Springing from their horses, the sportsmen rushed to their assistance ; between men and dogs, the buck was pulled down, thrown on his back, received the *coup de grace*, and the horns rang out the signal of his death.

The chase being ended, the gentlemen, who had left their horses, recrossed the fence and again mounted, when the unutterable amazement with which Percy had heard himself addressed as lord Umberdale was exchanged for a feeling of more immediate interest, for he perceived that the company were listening with marks of strong indignation to a person whom he now distinctly recollected to have seen at the General Greene on the evening of his arrest; and if he could have entertained a doubt that he was the subject of their conversation, it must have been removed by the dark looks which were thrown on him as they rode along, for they all proceeded in the direction he was going, and seemed determined to regulate their pace by his.

The conversation was partly carried on in whispers; but the following expressions were uttered so loud, he could not but overhear them.

“I’ll swear to the mare,” said one.

“ And I’ll swear to the man,” said another.

“ Major Bromley,” said a third, “ depend on it, this is the young spark who ——” Here the sentence was whispered so low, that Percy could only conjecture its purport by the major’s answer.

“ Is he so ?” cried the major ; “ then, by Jove, I would give a thousand dollars if there was only just so much of a gentleman about him as might serve to lodge a bullet ! The aspiring villain ! But surely you don’t mean to let the scoundrel go off with Stewart’s mare. Colonel Hopewell will be for bringing up his fair division as soon as he hears the horn. What say you —before they come ?”

A look of intelligence passed among them, and they were about to surround and seize Percy, when on the brow of a small hill, at the foot of which they then were, appeared two phætons and a coach. As the carriages came up, the gentlemen hunters paid their respects to the ladies, regretting the circumstance of their being



placed at the wrong pass, whereby they missed the death of the stag. Whilst this greeting was going on, a stout man of the party kept his hand on the bridle of the animal which Percy rode; though the unfortunate object of their suspicions thought of nothing less than escape, and waited but the attention of the company to explain his situation. But this his equanimity was of short duration, for of the three ladies in the coach with colonel Hopewell, he discovered that one was Maria Belcour.

Agitated, embarrassed, distressed as he was, still the idea struck him that the look with which she recognised him, conveyed nothing of scorn and indignation, and that it beamed not only with surprise, but at least with pity. This was the illusion of a moment only. The major was at the window of the carriage. Colonel Hopewell pointed to Percy, and inquired why he was not introduced?

The reply Percy did not hear; but he saw Maria's lovely face overspread with

the crimson flush of indignation, then become deadly pale. Her head sunk on the bosom of her sister, and the coach rolled on.

The young men again surrounded Percy, demanding of him an account of himself, and of his right to the mare on which he rode.

But Percy thought not of the mare, or of them. So deep-rooted, so fixed was the grief which preyed on his heart, and such was the haggard look of despair that glared from his eye as it followed the carriage, that the rough, though generous feelings of the sportsmen were affected, and they forbore to urge his reply. At length turning towards them with so manly, yet so melancholy an expression of countenance, that even their suspicions were nearly overcome by it, he said—"Gentlemen, I am a more unfortunate, but less guilty man than you believe me. The friend who accompanies me on this journey is known, I presume, to at least some of you. He has called at the residence of colonel Hopewell, and is to rejoin me at

no great distance from this spot. By remaining with me until he does so, any inquiry you may be disposed to make will be satisfactorily answered. In the meantime, gentlemen, I shall expect that my person and feelings will be respected. I am not disposed to converse."

Curiosity in some, and a better sentiment in others, induced them to await the arrival of Mr. Scott.

As the reader is aware that the affair must eventuate to the entire satisfaction of all their doubts respecting the sheriff's mare, and that Percy will be suffered quietly to pursue his journey, we will again turn our attention to Hopewell Hall.

Colonel Hopewell had, on the preceding day, invited the rural beaux of his neighbourhood to dine at the Hall; and one of them mentioning that he knew the cover of an *out-lying* buck, though the proper season had not arrived, it was proposed to treat the English gentlemen with a hunt; and as the precise spot at which the buck when hard pressed would enter the park



was thought to be known, the colonel prevailed on the ladies to promise to honour the field with their presence.

At daybreak the court-yard of the Hall rung with the joyous acclamations of the huntsmen, the impatient cry of the dogs, and the cheering notes of the horn.

“Old Towler,” was sung by a jovial sportsman, and the chorus, “this day a stag shall die,” vociferated by the whole party, with great animation. It was indeed—

“ ——— A most delightful morning,  
A charming day for hunting and for horning,  
For tearing farmers’ fences down, hallooings,  
Shouts, curses, oaths, and such like pious doings.”

And thus all redolent of joy, and youth, and big with the expectancy of pleasure, the gay cavalcade rode forth of the court-yard of Hopewell Hall.

Mr. De Vapour drove his own phæton on this occasion, while Miss Hopewell forgetting, in the pleasure she derived from this arrangement, her fears on the subject

of her presentment at the court of St. James's,

“ ——— Sat by his side,  
In flower of youth and beauty's pride ;”

at least so thought the young lady.

Mr. Henry sported lord Umberdale's phæton, which was graced by his fair cousin.

The Miss Belcours and Miss Jane Hope-well occupied Mrs. Belcour's coach, which also, as we have seen, contained the colonel.

Whilst lord Umberdale, not willing to yield any point to the young buckskins, which might seem to imply aught of derogation from the manly character of his ancestors, who were

“ Mighty hunters in their day ;”

and thinking also that, as an Englishman, he was bound to prove that he could ride with the foremost in field or through forest, with no little self-denial declined the pleasure of attaching himself to the ladies, and was the first to appear equipped for

the chase, and mounted on an English hunter.

Very different was the appearance of this gallant detachment, when, after a few hours absence only, it came "bounding back," in broken and separate divisions ; each having sustained, as it appeared, some notable defeat.

Mr. De Vapour had unequivocally, and in the very ear of Miss Hopewell, declared that " Mary was a charming girl ;" and Miss Hopewell, understanding all that the compliment implied, pouted, and hated her cousin accordingly.

The country gentlemen felt that their sagacity as huntsmen, and knowledge in *woodcraft*, might be fairly called in question ; for, though they had succeeded in killing the buck, his course had been different from the one they asserted he would take, and consequently neither the English gentlemen, nor the ladies, had been witnesses of their " deed of high emprise." Lord Umberdale and his horse had at the onset of the chase fully sustained their re-



spective reputations as an English *man* and an English *horse* ; but had soon after been thrown out, and had not been heard of since. Even the equable spirits of colonel Hopewell sunk many degrees below their customary level, as he witnessed the deep dejection of his favourite Maria, and the sympathetic tear which glistened in the eye of her sister.

Maria's heart had indeed been agitated, pained, and mortified in the highest degree, by this unexpected appearance of Percy. The undissembled admiration of lord Umberdale had caused her, the preceding evening, severely to scrutinize her feelings with regard to the unfortunate young man, over whose fallen fortunes hung so dark and portentous a cloud of mystery. This scrutiny terminated in the conviction, that were Percy to reappear, possessed of fame and character, he would again be possessed of her affections, to the exclusion of any other object.

Indulging in the most romantic and wildest dreams respecting him, he again

appears before her. He is again surrounded by gentlemen, as though he was supporting his claim to their society ; she expects, at the first recognition, he will rush towards her, anxious and able to wipe off the ignominy with which he had been covered when last she met him.

But his face is averted ; and to the colonel's question, she hears the fame-blighting answer.—“ He is the most accomplished swindler of the age. He has not only broke gaol ; but to prove himself a thorough-paced villain, he has in pure bravado stolen, and rode off on, no less a man's mare than the sheriff's.”

Such being the state of affairs, it was not strange that, as the parties severally arrived, they forthwith retired to their rooms.

The Miss Belcours found the good lady their mother, if not so much distressed, far more perplexed, than themselves ; for which they were wholly unable to account.

The reader, however, will be at no loss

on that score, as he is aware that she had had an interview with Mr. Scott. We have frequently hinted, that Mrs. Belcour had some intimation of the real name and character of the person calling himself Percy. The fact was, Cogwell had so artfully contrived (by what means it is not now necessary to relate), to make Mrs. Belcour believe, what was actually the truth, respecting him, that she had, with all her caution on the subject, taken her measures accordingly. When, however, she found he was the accomplice of such a wretch as Cogwell, she at once rejected all the evidence she had before considered so valid and satisfactory, as to his high birth and connexions. The resemblance he bore to lord Umberdale revived, as the reader has seen, her favourable impressions as to the truth of the communications which had been made to her, and the arrival at Hopewell Hall of Mr. Scott most undeniably confirmed them. Mrs. Belcour had not counted on so immediate a call for decision on the mighty point which now presented



itself. Can a moment's deliberation be necessary? it will be said.

Softly, gentle reader. This politic lady saw there was ample cause for many moments' deliberation, and very few were allowed her. That her daughter should be lady Umberdale, was certainly the *optimum*, the supreme good, in her estimation. But then, in playing for that high stake, might not all be lost? An interview must soon take place, and lord Umberdale would be reconciled to his long-estranged brother—for that Percy was that brother, she now knew. His brother would resume his rank in society, and with it his pretensions—those pretensions to her daughter's hand formerly so well founded. Were his lordship kept in ignorance of them—did he at length discover that all of Maria's partiality for his person arose from his resemblance to a more favoured lover, over whom his title alone gave him an advantage, and that lover his long-lost brother—was it safe to hazard such a *dénouement*? Again, was lord Umberdale en-

couraged to press his suit (for Mrs. Belcour assumed it as a settled point that such suit was begun), might not the brother himself, in the event of his lordship's throwing up, also see cause to withdraw from the lists?

It will be remarked, that in this nice calculation, the young lady's affections formed no item whatever. But on the entrance of her daughters, Mrs. Belcour instantly perceived that the person most interested must now be consulted, for matters were drawing to a crisis. Had they seen Percy? or had lord Umberdale met him? were questions she wished to ask; but she did not deem it prudent that Maria should as yet know she was sufficiently acquainted with his movements to be aware that Percy was so near.

Maria complained of fatigue, and retired to her own room, when a few words from Eliza explained to her mother the cause of her agitation. Lord Umberdale they had not seen; Eliza understood he had been thrown out in the chase, and that

the colonel's servants were now in quest of him, on the supposition that he had lost his way in the wood.

“ Now then,” thought Mrs. Belcour, “ now is the time to drive him from her heart—now, whilst the belief of his utter unworthiness of a place there is so strongly impressed on her.”

One word would have removed her daughter's cares, and revived her affections for the unfortunate, once imprudent and guilty, but now changed and reformed, object of her attachment; but that word Mrs. Belcour thought it not good to say.

It was only at a late dinner-hour that lord Umberdale reached the Hall; and as the ladies descended to the drawing-room, Mrs. Belcour heard with consternation that he appeared greatly discomposed, and had on the instant of his arrival desired a private conference with colonel Hopewell.

“ All,” thought Mrs. Belcour, “ is lost—irrecoverably lost! They *have* met; and Maria, my darling Maria, is sunk, degraded, in the eyes of both.”



With the distracting reflection that she was the guilty cause, she entered the room. Lord Umberdale was already there; his face discovered marks of recent agitation; but his address to her was even more than polite—it was respectful. To Maria, his attentions were most particular; and when observing her unusual depression, he next addressed her, his manner was soothing and tender.

“Can they have met?” thought Mrs. Belcour. “Can his brother have told him that he had been the encouraged admirer of Maria? Can they have been all the morning together, and has he not told him this; and does he still urge his suit? Then Maria will be lady Umberdale in spite of fate!—They must have met,” said Mrs. Belcour to herself, as she continued to muse on the subject—“they must have met: what other cause could have detained or interested him in a country so entirely new to him?” Thus reasoned Mrs. Belcour; but her reasoning was wide of the mark.

Lord Umberdale did not meet his brother—was entirely ignorant of the circumstance of having that morning been near him—was equally ignorant that his brother had ever seen, much less loved, the fair object over whom he now hung so enamoured; and thus Mrs. Belcour did

“ —————As others do,  
Who argue in the dark and in confusion;  
That is, from the premises she drew  
A false conclusion.”

I know that some of our fair readers will deny the position; but it will generally hold good nevertheless, that, for a heart, lacerated by the necessity of tearing from it an object which is found unworthy a place there, “the sovereignest thing on earth that can be devised, is an opportunity of filling the vacuum, so produced, by another of acknowledged and undisputed excellence.”

In the then agitated state of Maria's feelings, an immediate offer of lord Umberdale's hand might have been rejected; but she found, in the unreserved atten-

tions which he paid her at dinner, the only balm which could have been afforded to her wounded spirit.

The mortification which arose from the reflection, that she had been considered as a fit object against which the schemes of a swindling villain might be directed, was soothed by the consciousness that she was not deemed unworthy the undissembled admiration of one whose birth, fortune, and excellent endowments, placed him amongst the first in society; and therefore her manner was so certainly, though undesignedly, influenced by sentiments of good-will towards him who had afforded her this seasonable relief, that a young man of far inferior pretensions to lord Umberdale, might, without being a coxcomb, have felt there was no cause for despair; and this gave such animation to his countenance, and tenderness to his address, that the merest tyro at table, in such matters, pronounced his lordship's devotion to the fair American to be unequivocal.



Colonel Hopewell, as has been before stated was his custom, left the table soon after the ladies, and the gentlemen had no sooner entered the drawing-room, than a subject of much speculation arose from the following circumstance: the colonel's carriage was announced as in readiness, and after a formal apology to the ladies for thus leaving them, and a strict injunction from the colonel to his young countrymen to be very agreeable, lord Umberdale, the colonel, and Mr. De Vapour, entered the carriage, without any mention of the object of their ride.

These young gentlemen of the south were not (*absit invidia verbo*) so interesting as we hope the reader has found our young ladies; and sooth to say, when they discovered they were left to *do battle* for a whole afternoon, against such an array of taste, beauty, and refinement, without other assistance than their own proper resources might afford, they felt, one and all, disposed to decline the adventure.

Mary Hopewell, ever considerate, feel-

ing for the awkward situation of her neighbours, adverted to the preparations said to be making at Norborne Lodge for the next day's entertainment. This was a subject the gentlemen could converse on, and they did not neglect it.

They related, with some humour, the intelligence which had reached them of the hurly-burly into which the quiet inmates of that ancient, solemn, silent mansion had been thrown on the return of Mrs. Berkley from Hopewell Hall, conveying the wonderful report to Minty, that lord Umberdale and a great party were to dine at the Lodge.

Fortunately, they said, the court was sitting at ——. Mr. Courtal was there in attendance on it, and had promised the old lady, in reply to her request, that he would furnish her with guests for a ball, which she meant to give in honour of the arrival of her dear lamented friend, lady Umberdale's son—to bring the whole bench and bar, plaintiffs, defendants, and witnesses, with as many of their wives and

daughters as could be collected on so short a notice.

“There are some notorious offenders to be tried, I understand,” said one of the gentlemen; “I hope their irons are not to be knocked off for the night.”

“Perhaps,” said Mrs. Belcour laughing, “they may be introduced, ‘to clank their chains in triumph and rude harmony.’”

“No, no,” said major Bromley, “not the culprits; but that reminds me of the affair this morning. I did not mention it before the English gentlemen, seeing it concerned one of their countrymen.”

Mrs. Belcour looked round in agony; but her daughters had left the room, and she revived; for the major proceeded to give such a circumstantial detail of the intended arrest of Percy, and particularly of the clear evidence of Mr. Scott, as must have discovered to her daughters, had they heard him, the mysterious, if not double part which their mother was acting.

“Oh, what a tangled web we weave,”



says the great poet of the north—

“ Oh, what a tangled web we weave,  
When first we practise to deceive !”

Mrs. Belcour felt the truth of this observation; and whilst she warmly commended the major for not mentioning the circumstance before, hinted that it would be a point of discretion and kindness to say no more on the subject to any one.

Lord Umberdale then, she found by comparing dates, had not met his brother; and her fears, founded on the supposition that the dreaded discovery was made, were fallacious.

The major represented Percy and Mr. Scott as quietly proceeding on their journey to the parsonage; but had lord Umberdale's abrupt departure, this evening, with the colonel and Mr. De Vapour, any connexion with his brother? This was a question she could not fathom. Awaiting their return, before she took her measures, she determined to make no premature disclosure to Maria of the real circumstances

attending the fortunes of her ill-fated admirer.

The events of the day had been watched by Eliza with deep interest and concern, as well as much perplexity. The turns in her sister's mind she plainly traced, and found it not difficult to understand them; but, in endeavouring to follow the clue of her mother's course of action, she found herself entirely bewildered.

That there was something concealed, something mysterious about her, she saw; and open, generous, and candid herself, felt grieved at the idea, that her mother could subject herself to such a suspicion from her daughter.—“Alas!” she thought, as she sat by her lovely sister, whom the varied emotions she had undergone had so fatigued and discomposed, that she had sunk on the bed and appeared to slumber, “alas!” said she, “how widely do those paths, which all those I love pursue so eagerly, lead away from happiness! On what glittering toys do they fix their hearts, and, oh, on what will they not

trample to obtain them! I have been told, a thousand, thousand times, that the most sincerely devoted and religious persons may be found, without danger to themselves, in the most fashionable and gayest society; nay, that they may form an essential part of that society. My little experience tells me it is not so. What, the gay, the fashionable receive comfort from the exercise of their religious faith? No, no; they have no time to be religious; their hearts are too full of this world's goods—of vanity, and (she turned a melancholy look on her sister) how truly could my poor Maria say, of vexation!"

Mrs. Belcour remained no longer with the party below than seemed to satisfy her, that the subject of the rencounter with the young Englishman was at rest; and she now joined her daughters in their apartment. Maria rose as her mother entered. Not one word did the good lady say respecting lord Umberdale: her experience told her, his lordship was likely



to prove the best advocate in his own cause. Mrs. Berkley's party was a safer theme.—“ I think it quite probable,” said she, after mentioning the preparations of which she had heard, “ that George Berkley will be there.”

“ I have little doubt of it,” replied Eliza: “ his father's illness would scarcely keep so fine a gentleman from a party.”

“ You might have spared the ill-natured observation, Miss Eliza,” said Mrs. Belcour. “ Major Bromley informs he was at Scoreum's the day we left it; that colonel Berkley was so much recovered as to be able to return home in the evening; and it was said, George Berkley had got to the Park.”

“ I am very, very glad,” said Eliza, “ to hear of his recovery. I should like to know if his old friend, the Methodist preacher, accompanied him.”

“ You have no curiosity respecting the preacher's companion, I hope, Miss Eliza?” said Mrs. Belcour, and she fixed on her a look which Eliza well understood.

As her thoughts at the moment were really directed towards the young stranger of the inn, she coloured deeply, as she answered (an untruth or evasion were equally strangers to Eliza's lips)—“Our obligations to the young gentleman you allude to, mamma, are too great to be forgotten: I cannot deny that I shall always feel interested to hear of his welfare.”

Mrs. Belcour bit her lip from pure vexation; but she had plans in agitation, which she knew would be little advanced by an angry remonstrance on the subject; and she coolly said she was obliged to the young man for his kindness, but she could not pretend to any particular solicitude concerning him.

Eliza had intended to beg her mother's permission to decline being of the party on the following day; but seeing this was not a propitious moment in which to make the request, she forbore to do so, and Mrs. Belcour soon after left the room.

About sunset the three gentlemen, whose ride during the hottest part of the

day had been the cause of so many speculations, returned. All eyes were turned towards them, but nothing transpired to satisfy the inquiring glance and listening ear.

Colonel Hopewell again apologized for their absence, but made not the slightest allusion to the cause of it. It could plainly be seen by Mr. De Vapour's look of increased importance, that there was a secret in the case, and that he attached no little consequence to the circumstance of being admitted to the confidence of a nobleman.

Lord Umberdale's countenance wore a shade of melancholy reflection, which gave way however to the kindling flush of admiration, as he advanced towards Maria.

What would Mrs. Belcour have given, in her critical situation, to have been able to interpret all or any of these looks! His lordship's attention to Maria was unabated, and so far, at least, all was well; but versed as she was, the secret, of whatever nature it might be, lay too deep for her penetration.



The night was far advanced when the company separated; and so engrossed were lord Umberdale's thoughts, by two subjects of the deepest interest, that instead of retiring to bed, he took his seat at an open window. He had remained only a few moments in this situation, when he heard the sound of approaching footsteps, and, in an instant after, he saw the poor poet of Hopewell again occupying his station under the aspin tree. His attitude was that of the most hopeless despondence: deep sighs and plaintive ejaculations were the only sounds he uttered, until after a pause, during which he repeatedly clasped his hands with an energy which denoted the high-wrought tone of his feelings, he sung, in a soft, low, though impassioned voice, the following words:—

“ I could drive from this bosom  
All thought of the fair;  
And the shaft, howe'er poison'd,  
Should ne'er rankle there.  
If beauty, mere beauty,  
Directed the dart,  
I could scorn it, and tear it,  
At once from my heart.

“ But when love lights the taper,  
By virtue’s pure flame,  
Though its heat may consume me,  
Let it still burn the same ;  
Nay brighter and brighter  
Still glow in my breast,  
Till my heart and my love  
Sink together to rest.”

It will readily be supposed, that lord Umberdale listened with intense interest to the expression of sentiments so congenial with his own, and to which the romantic character and situation of the singer gave a peculiar and touching effect. An involuntary expression of his participation in the feelings of the minstrel, caused him to start from his position, and examine, with nervous eagerness, who had thus intruded on him at an hour he deemed peculiarly his own.—“ It is the friend,” said lord Umberdale, as the youth approached the window, “ to whom you promised to communicate the progress you make in the ballad you are composing, concerning the English baron. What have you been able to gather touching his affairs ?”

“ Oh, the baron’s affairs,” said the poet, passing at once, with the quickness and instability of a crazed imagination, from one subject to another—“ the baron’s affairs are so puzzled with mazes, and perplexed with error, that I cannot get at them. There is no keeping in his story, sir!—no keeping. Why the legend of ‘ sir Cauline ’ is an every-day occurrence to it. I had got as far as the hanging scene ; and had pleased myself with the expectation of having the salt, salt tear wept over my description.”

“ The hanging scene ! ” said lord Umberdale, laughing.

“ Yes, sir,” said the poet, “ the hanging scene ; and very fine it was.

‘ The rope is round his noble neck,  
And pity it was to see  
A youth so full of gentle blood,  
Hang on the gallows tree.’

“ But all this, it appears, must be omitted. I have it from a sure hand—one directly from the scene of action. In comes a necromancer, under the similitude



of a Scotch parson, and cuts me from the best part of my tale, for heigh: 'presto, pass and be gone.'

'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in good green wood,  
Where the deep-mouth'd dogs are braying;  
And she is aware that the knight is there,  
And there is the fair maid straying.'

"They met," said he: "I have that also from a sure hand. They met; but nothing came of it—nothing that I can work on; and the baron's star is still lord of the ascendant.

'But though his castle walls rise high,  
And honour'd be his name,  
One glance from the hapless wanderer's eye,  
Would wake the now half-slumbering sigh,  
And light the smother'd flame."

"Indeed!" cried lord Umberdale; "is it even so?" and he started on his feet as an idea crossed his mind, which he would not have realized for the barony of Umberdale and Arley.

The poet appeared to be collecting himself for another effusion, when steps were heard, and old Mingo suddenly turning

an angle of the house, seized the unfortunate minstrel by the arm, saying—"Master Charley, this is too bad—sick as you have been all day, to be out at this time of night: then only to think—can you find no one to disturb but lord Umberdale?"

"Lord Umberdale!" said the youth, violently breaking from his old guardian—"lord Umberdale did you say? This is beyond my hopes.

'A boon, a boon! most noble peer,  
A boon I claim of thee;  
Since death you cannot fail to choose,  
Say, what death shall it be?'

Only tell me that, and I will finish the ballad before I sleep.—Off! off, I say, thou dusky denizen of darkness! I will have his lordship's answer before I quit this spot.—Oh, my sweet, honey lord! do you mean to cut your throat?—that is soonest done; or hang yourself?—that is most natural; or drown yourself?—that is most poetical; and that will suit me best. As you love me, my good lord, de-

cide on drowning; you will lay me under an infinite obligation !”

The evident insanity of the speaker was such, that lord Umberdale’s half-awakened suspicions gave place to concern for the hapless youth, as on his uttering these wild words, old Mingo, who found remonstrance was vain, took him in his arms and bore him away.



CHAPTER VII.  
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Uberem vallem, salubrem venam,
Cursu fluminis amenam,
Lætam sylvis et frondosam
Heræ mente speciosam.

Valleys smiling, bottoms pleasing,
Streaming rivers never ceasing,
Deck'd with tufty woods and shady,
Graced by a wiseish lady. *My Pocket Book.*

Norborne Lodge.

BETWEEN twenty-five and thirty years previous to the commencement of our story, Mrs. Berkley, of Norborne Lodge, had accompanied her husband to England, where he remained a few months for the purpose of settling some affairs which required his personal attention. During her short stay she had been introduced, as we have seen, to lady Umberdale; and as

the honour of this acquaintance had been from that time uppermost in the good lady's thoughts, we are not to wonder if the unlooked-for opportunity, of entertaining the son of her illustrious friend, was considered as an event of more importance than any which had occurred at Norborne Lodge since the death of its master.

Mr. Berkley, the elder brother of our acquaintance, the colonel, had been dead about ten years; but as the estate was entailed on his brother's son, and his widow possessed few personal attractions, she had never been so warmly importuned as to hazard a second venture; and passed the greater part of her time in perusing English newspapers, with files of which she was regularly furnished, or in poring over the pages of "The Ladies' Magazine."

The separation of the colonies from the mother country was, in her eyes, an act of such atrocity, that she struck from her list of friends all who were in anywise aiding and abetting in what she called "that most unnatural and ungrateful rebellion." As

this black roll of rebels comprehended all her acquaintance, she was reduced to the company of her favourite maid Minty, and the newspapers and magazine afore-said. Of late, however, her spirit of rancour towards the republicans seemed divested of something of its bitterness.

Mary Hopewell had attended her with the kindest and most watchful care, during a long fit of illness with which the old lady had been afflicted; and she had in consequence so far forgiven colonel Hopewell for his undutiful conduct towards the mother country, as to renew her visits at Hopewell Hall. But most of all had her toryism been mollified by the gallant Mr. Courtal. This gentleman was engaged in a cause in which Mrs. Berkley's deposition was all-important. It was a point of some nicety, and he undertook to manage it in person. The event was most propitious to the enlargement of Mrs. Berkley's acquaintance; for Mr. Courtal became from that time the arranger of matters at the Lodge. The

lady's aspect, on the lawyer's first appearance, was most ungracious, and she seemed determined, to use his own expression, to depone—" *nil novit in causa* ;" but he refreshed her memory.—" You will recollect, madam, that at the breaking out of the troubles, most persons who were so fortunate as to have a visiting acquaintance at Norborne Lodge, would crowd in upon you as soon as a ship arrived from England ; for it was natural to suppose, madam, that from Mr. Berkley's connexions, and your own well-known intimacy amongst the nobility, the intelligence they got *here* might be depended on."

The lady rung the bell.

" Now it was upon one of those occasions that the circumstance——(The servant entered)—to which I would call your attention."

" Have Mr. Courtal's horses put up," said the lady.—" You must stay and dine with me, sir, and I will endeavour to give you the information you require."

Mr. Courtal improved the advantage he

had gained to the utmost—became the confidential agent of Mrs. Berkley, and was on the event, the particulars of which we are about to record, intrusted with the care of providing as befitting a company as could be collected from among the degenerate sons and daughters of her native land.

The ample estate which surrounded Norborne Lodge had been *located* at a very early period of the settlement of the state. A rude inscription, on a stone slab over the front doorway, actually bore date A. D. 1652; and Mrs. Berkley would, to her confidential friends, sometimes whisper, as she pointed to the narrow windows, or rather slits in the wall of a certain chamber, that it was built with a view to the accommodation and security of nothing less than majesty itself.—“ You may read,” she would say, “ on the four hundred and sixty-sixth page of the third volume of my lord Clarendon’s History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England, how that its then loyal owner ‘ writ a let-

ter to the unfortunate Charles, after the battle of Wor'ster,' *almost* inviting him hither, as to a place that wanted nothing. We call it," she would add, speaking low, and with an air of mystery—"we call it, in the family, 'the king's chamber.'"

"It is aptly so called," said Mr. Courtal, when this important secret was intrusted to his ear; doubtless "*ut lucus a non lucendo*," seeing that unlucky word "*almost*" stood in the way of the good king's acceptance of an offer which was *never* made.

At this mansion, about half-past two o'clock on a hot summer's day, arrived the party from Hopewell Hall, and found a company of ten or twelve gentlemen already collected. A case, which excited considerable interest through the state, was at this time before the court, then sitting at a short distance from Mrs. Berkley's; and Mr. Courtal had been able to select from amongst the characters collected on the occasion such an assemblage of guests, that although, from the extreme

simplicity in the dress of some, and utter neglect of the appearance of the outward man in others, that highly-connected lady was little pleased at the thought of presenting such persons to the son of her noble friend; yet, as they were severally introduced to the young lord, his cheek flushed with surprise and admiration at the mention of each successive name; for he found himself surrounded by a circle of men who had either been their country's voice in council, or her sword in battle. Their achievements in the field were emblazoned on the page of history; or the thunder of their eloquence in the senate had waked that spirit of liberty, which was never more to sleep! They had received the rich reward of their toils in the freedom of their country, and retired, a band of Cincinnati, to their farms; as yet anxious for the success of their still-untried constitution, and trembling lest the bands which held the now United States together should prove too weak to resist

the bursting swells of faction, or the agonizing throes of conflicting interests. How wild, at that moment, would have been the supposition, that there was amongst that little group of unassuming country gentlemen, one who would live to see that constitution so much the object of men's regard, the bands of that confederation so strong, and their borders so enlarged, that he, as the elected chief of the freemen they surrounded, should, in the fulness of time, be empowered to say to the astonished rulers of the old world, "there must the iron hand of despotism be stayed; it shall not crush our sister republics in the new!" Yet such highly-favoured man was there.

Lord Umberdale was so fortunate as to secure to himself the pleasure of Maria's company, by driving her in his phæton; which the reader may something wonder at, if he recollects the care which Mrs. Belcour is stated, in a former part of this work, to have taken to screen her from the sun: and this, be it known, was a

scorcher in July. But the fear of freckles gave way to matters of mightier concern, in the mind of the politic lady. Yet scarce was the arrangement made, his lordship driven off with his fair charge, and Mrs. Belcour seated in her own coach with Eliza and Mary Hopewell, than a thought struck her which filled her with the most agonizing apprehensions. She reflected, that in all probability the first person they should meet at Norborne Lodge would be Mr. Courtal; and her fertile imagination already represented the gay old lawyer rattling away on the subject of the adventure of his mare Fatima, in which the dreaded Percy bore so conspicuous a part.—“One question,” said Mrs. Belcour to herself—“one question only from lord Umberdale, on the subject, to that old garrulous coxcomb, and we are undone.”

Again Mrs. Belcour found her fears were groundless. Arrived at the Lodge, she was handed from her carriage by two

gentlemen, who, though offering their assistance on each side, she scarcely noticed, such was her agitation. Little did Mrs. Belcour imagine, that in process of time, most of the crowned heads of Europe would think it no derogation from their kingly and imperial honours, or (be that as it may) would at least see fit, to send their trusty and well-beloved subjects across the Atlantic, for the express purpose of representing their own most sacred persons, in the presence of both these gentlemen: yet so it came to pass.

Mr. Courtal, as master of the ceremonies, met her at the door; and, as he handed her through the dark, encumbered passage, whispered her (for he had remarked her inquietude, and guessed the cause)—“How could you, my dear madam, think me such a Marplot?”

Mrs. Belcour revived; and entering the drawing-room, and seeing lord Umberdale engaged in an animated conversation amid a group of gentlemen, she blessed the lawyer in her heart, and from that moment

ranked him first and foremost amongst the sons of Themis.

The interim between the assemblage of a dinner-party and the actual onset, or rather I should say, down-set, to the dinner itself, has ever been held as hard to endure —'tis harder to describe. The guests on this occasion seemed well to brook the delay, though it was something considerable; yet did poor Mrs. Berkley find it a moment of awful suspense. It was long since such a festival had been solemnized within her walls; and dire was the din of preparation, and great the confusion in the kitchen of Norborne Lodge.

At this moment, so big with expectation, a distant crash of china was heard, accompanied by the indignant shriek of Minty; but Mrs. Berkley kept her seat with a composure worthy one who was accustomed to the entertainments of lords and ladies; though it conveyed the too certain intelligence to her ears, that the soup was wasting its fragrance on the kitchen stairs.

At length the viands were placed on the table to Minty's satisfaction, and dinner was announced as ready. But ere the ceremonial was adjusted with such due respect to the right of precedence, as Mrs. Berkley had previously settled in her own mind would be fit and proper, a coach arrived at the door, which contained the identical colonel Longacre, and his wife and daughter, whom it may be remembered we presented to notice on a former occasion.

An accidental delay had prevented their more seasonable appearance; and Mrs. Berkley, though from some circumstance of family connexion she could not but invite them on this occasion, would have been well content, from the coarse and pompous manner of the colonel, if the detention had been of longer duration; and, without subjecting the company to the delay of a particular introduction, they were permitted to seat themselves. It was the custom of that day to make an apology for the dinner, however sumptu-

ous it might be; and Mrs. Berkley, as having been long unused to the furnishing forth of so large a repast, felt that she was entitled to some indulgence for any real or imaginary defect, and this indulgence she claimed.

Her eye unfortunately rested, for a moment as she did so, on colonel Long-acre, and that important gentleman thought it his part to make a befitting reply—"I can answer for it," said he, "that the dinner is very good—very good indeed, madam, *what there is of it!*"

The stately old lady did not trust her indignant eye to turn upon him; and the man of wealth found, by the illy-concealed smiles of her guests, that he had committed some solecism in point of politeness, and thus corrected his mistake—"And I'm sure, madam, there's a plenty of it—*such as it is!*"

This last flourish caused a general smile to pass round the table, which encouraged a young fox-hunter, who thought himself a wag, to try his hand—"I would never

wish," said he, "to sit down to a *worse* dinner as long as I live, or a *better*, madam, upon my honour."

This was all taken, as it was meant, in good part; and the company were beginning, as Dartneuf would have said, "to sit up and attend to their business," when colonel Longacre perceiving Maria for the first time, cried out—"Ah, Miss Maria Belcour, is that you! Pray when did you hear from your friend, the duke of Northumberland?"

Lord Umberdale, who was sitting opposite to her, hearing her thus abruptly questioned, looked towards her, and, to his utter amazement, saw her pale and agitated.

Mrs. Belcour actually started from her chair, and threw an imploring glance on Mr. Courtal, who proved himself worthy her confidence in this emergency.—"Colonel Longacre," said he, "is the best judge of land of any man in the county, or indeed in the state; but I must say, his knowledge of matters which pass beyond seas is not quite so accurate."

“That’s true, lawyer Courtal,” said the colonel—“that’s true enough; I never meddle or make with matters that don’t concern me; but as for that young fellow we were talking about——”

“True, colonel, true,” said Mr. Courtal; “I don’t wonder he should live in your remembrance.” Then winking to the company, he continued—“The colonel never will forgive the stout earl for his intronitting with his neighbours’ deer, during his three days’ pleasure in the Scottish woods. But, colonel, if you go on as you have done, these lads must part with their hounds, or hunt in *your* woods; for, I believe in my conscience, you mean to purchase the whole county. Do you know that I was through that last purchase of yours the other day? But, my good, sir, is it true you gave twenty-five dollars per acre?”

The colonel, as Mr. Courtal foresaw, instantly began a vindication of his bargain; and the latter would have exchanged a

look of encouragement with Mrs. Belcour, but that lady could not regain her composure; she had indeed too much reason to fear a recurrence to the subject of Percy, so soon as the colonel should have vindicated himself from the charge of having purchased his land at a fair price.

Thus in momentary expectation of an explosion, which would destroy all her hopes, she was forced to give her attention to what was passing around her, and experience something of what Macbeth might have been supposed to feel, whilst though listening for the cry, which he knew would immediately be raised, for the murder of Duncan, was nevertheless obliged to hear, with seeming intent, the tedious account of the last night's tempest.

Lord Umberdale was an attentive observer, and he perceived there was something more in all this than met the ear; and as in war, so also in love affairs, there is always something to fear, when there is something known to be concealed, he felt disturbed and uneasy.

Altogether in his element was Mr. Courtal. On his nice management of a delicate matter of this description, he greatly valued himself, and, in a word, considered himself able to play the whole game. He saw at once Mrs. Belcour's object, and though he considered the game as nearly desperate, yet the stake he allowed was great; and whispering to himself, "*nil desperandum me duce*," he determined to exert all his abilities in her cause.

His first object was to draw off the attention of colonel Longacre, and he did so after this manner. The colonel was a keen sportsman, and particularly prided himself on his manner of training his hounds. Mr. Courtal knew that a distinguished gentleman, then present, was warmly opposed to fox-hunting, on the ground of the severity used in the training up of young hounds: adopting the maxim of Montaigne, that there is a certain general claim of kindness and benevolence which every creature has a right to expect from us, he reprobated the severity with which a

sportsman treats a faithful animal, to whom he professes to be obliged for so much diversion.

Aware of this, Mr. Courtal no sooner found that the colonel began to flag on the subject of his land, than he started him afresh on the subject of his hounds, which held the next place in his heart—"My dear colonel," said he, "how is it that you always have the most stanch pack in the state? how do you break them?"

"By flogging them," replied the colonel; "flog them while you are feeding them—that's the way to break them."

"'Tis but sorry sauce to their meat however," said Mr. Courtal. "But how do you prevent their running after hares?"

"By flogging them," replied the sportsman; "'tis the easiest thing in the world: put a hare into the kennel, then put a couple of stout fellows in to flog every hound, calling him by name, and rating him as often as he goes near the hare—you can't rate them too much, or cut them too hard."

“Our compassion,” said Eliza to lord Umberdale, by whom she was seated, “is divided between the luckless hound and the miserable hare, placed in such a situation.”

“Mingled,” he whispered her, “with our indignation against the sportsman.”

Mr. Courtal, not yet succeeding in bringing out the gentleman of whom we have spoken, thus went on in his inquiries. —“But, colonel, if any of your hounds are particularly fond of hare, how do you manage in that case?”

“Why then,” said the colonel, “I take them out by themselves on days that I do not hunt, and have them flogged as long as my patience lasts. It’s a fair trial between that and the whipper; and the whipper generally tires first.”

“Good!” said the lawyer; “so eat or not eat, work or play, flogging is always in season. Well, really hunting is a most delightful recreation, and your genuine sportsman is the only useful and humane character.”

Here there were many voices raised from the lower end of the table in vindication of hunting, from the necessity of destroying mischievous animals; and the gentleman to whom we have alluded now saw it was his place to speak.—“There is,” said he, “a clear distinction between hunting to rid a country of mischievous animals, and hunting from motives of wanton sport and fictitious glory. Hunting in an uncultivated and newly-settled country, may be a necessary business; or it may be a pleasure, grafted on a necessary business; but in an enclosed, well-cleared, and long-settled country, like this, it is an expensive system of tyranny and barbarity, in all its circumstances, from beginning to end.”

“But air and exercise,” it was observed—“may not these be permitted as pleas for the chase?”

“By no means,” he returned. “They may be enjoyed, to their full extent, in a variety of rural exercises which do not depend on the abuse and torture of any liv-

ing being susceptible of pain ; and I appeal to every person of feeling who has attended to the treatment just described (and it is universally practised), if he can lay his hand on his heart and say, that it agrees with that sentiment which we dignify by the term—humanity.”

As this gentleman was ever heard with respect, a silence of some moments ensued ; and colonel Longacre, though he did not understand, and was incapable of feeling, the rebuke, yet he perceived that a rebuke was intended, and he sat, for the remainder of the time which the ladies spent at the table, crest-fallen and silent.

The invitations to the dance, with which Mrs. Berkley had determined to amuse her young company, had, through the agency of Mr. Courtal, been very general ; and when the ladies returned to the drawing-room, they found it already pretty well filled with belles (though, if we may use the colonel's expression, we must add) “ such as they were.” The Miss Hopewells suffered themselves to be much

amused at witnessing the shifts and devices by which *those people of no fashion* attempted to tread on the heels of *people of some fashion*.

“Strange that such difference there should be
’Twixt tweedle-*dum* and tweedle-*dee*.”

Yet it must be confessed, that the rural maid puffs on at a fearful distance from the point at which she aspires to arrive. She is ever beginning when the fashion is ending; she is no sooner possessed of a fresh article of finery, than, alas! she finds—’tis nought; in short, she is, in spite of her endeavours, ever dressed entirely contrary to the rule of right—that is, the fashion. As the Strephons who accompanied these Delias of the plain did not venture to enter the room, where the array of female charms was indeed formidable, but continued loitering in the piazza, or grouped in the passage, the ladies were left in quiet possession of the fortress for some minutes. At length, however, those who were nearest the drawing-room door were fairly

pushed in by the crowd behind ; and thus, though intending only to reconnoitre and form some estimate of the danger to be incurred, they were unexpectedly driven to make a *lodgment* on the very *body of the place*. In this perilous situation they were reinforced by the breaking up of the dinner-party ; and when colonel Hopewell entered at the head of his division, the room was crowded to suffocation.

The tragedy of the Black Hole, as it was performed in Calcutta, might have been reacted on this occasion, had not a proposal been seasonably made, to sally forth upon the green terrace before the door, to which the now lengthened shades of the evening gave a most inviting appearance.

In the *melée* which this general movement occasioned, Mrs. Belcour found the first opportunity she had been able to seize of speaking to Mr. Courtal. She was about to thank him for his assistance, and to consult him on some points with which she was still perplexed, when the gay law-

yer's shoulder was seized by a young man, who told him he must speak a word with him, for it was a case of life and death.

"To-morrow, my good young friend, to-morrow," said the lawyer.

"To-morrow!" replied the youth, with a deep sigh—"to-morrow will be too late—it's a now-or-never business."

"Say you so?" said the lawyer. "Then dispatch, my worthy client, dispatch. Let me have no says I's and says he's."

"But that lady," said the youth, bashfully.

"Oh, she is hard of hearing—other people's concerns. Say on."

"Why then, first and foremost," said the rustic beau, "I'm in love."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Courtal. "It was truly said of you, that your case would not keep cool until to-morrow. But what is the difficulty? A man whose corn-rows are half a mile long, is not over likely to meet with cruelty and scorn. What is

your difficulty, my young Cymon the second?"

"The matter is this," was the answer. "Father made me promise on his death-bed never to do any thing of consequence without consulting of you. And so you must give me an answer directly, if you please, sir, how you like the match?"

The gay old man, light-hearted as he was, did not hear of this mark of confidence reposed in him by a dying man without emotion; nor was he unmoved by the filial reverence of the youth, oddly as it was shewn.—"You shall have my advice, my young friend," said he, "in this and in all other matters in which you may think it can be of service to you; but at present I am particularly engaged, and not knowing the lady——"

"Oh, the lady!" said the enamoured swain; "she is the finest, the most——"

"Hold, hold!" said the lawyer, stopping his mouth with his hand; "let me hear her name—the name she goes by at home."

“ Her name !” said the youth rapturously—“ her name is Miss Eliza Belcour.”

“ Good !” said Mr. Courtal, with assumed gravity. “ Your worthy father had little occasion, I find, to distrust your sagacity in the choice of a wife at least.”

“ There !” said the delighted lover—“ there now ; I knew it. Then you give your consent ?”

“ Freely,” said Mr. Courtal, as he looked at Mrs. Belcour and laughed—“ freely ; provided you get the young lady’s, I will be no bar to your happiness.”

The youth made him a bow of thanks, and was moving off ; but suddenly turning to him—“ Mr. Courtal,” said he, “ they say you are prodigious ’cute in these matters : what compliment would you advise me to begin with ? If that’s not a matter of consequence, I’d be glad to know what is ? I think to tell her she is the most beautifullest creature on earth.”

“ ’Twill not much, if at all, exceed my own opinion on the subject,” said Mr. Courtal.

“ You don’t think, then, she’d take it amiss ?” said the lover.

“ Why it has been often served up before,” said Mr. Courtal, “ though somewhat differently dressed. However, I never heard that it was ever complained of, in any shape, so it certainly has the advantage of practical experience to recommend it.”

At a moment of less anxiety Mrs. Belcour would have enjoyed this singular scene ; but her mind was occupied by weightier concerns ; and she had preserved such a gravity of countenance during the consultation, that the young gentleman, in the simplicity of his heart, concluded she was deeply interested in his cause. Under this impression, he took her gently by the arm, saying—“ Just come to this window, madam, and I will shew her to you. You shall judge for yourself, if a man mayn’t go further and fare worse.”

Perplexed as she was, Mrs. Belcour could not avoid being amused at this re-

ference, and she suffered herself to be led to the window.

“That’s her,” said the admirer—“that’s her sitting on that old high-backed bench under the locust-tree—she sitting at the end of the bench, with dark eyes and chesnut hair. ’Twas along of that bench that I got acquainted; and if Mrs. Berkley will let me have it home to my house—you see, madam, it’s an old thing, not worth a cent—but I’d give the elegantest sofa for it that ever was made by hands. They were all standing, fanning away for dear life under the tree, and I runs and brings the bench, and down they all plump’d, without saying with your leave or by your leave, except she: ‘As you have been so good as to bring it, sir,’ said she, ‘you are at least entitled’—yes, that was the word ‘entitled’—‘to a seat on it.’ And as I’m a living man, she made room for me to sit by her. Never die, but that very moment I made choice of her.”

“And what reason have you to hope

she will make choice of you?" said Mrs. Belcour, smiling.

"I should have just none in the world," replied he, "for the Belcours are very grand, topping people, but for one thing."

"And pray let me hear what might that be?" said Mrs. Belcour.

"Do you see that young lady that's sitting on the same bench with her?—— I'm determined," said he, "to ask Mrs. Berkley to give me that same bench, for good luck's sake, for she's got no more use for it than a dog has for a side-pocket, as the saying is."

"Well, but the young lady?" said Mrs. Belcour.

"I mean her," replied the youth, "that the Englishman, with the outlandish hat under his arm, is standing by, and be hang'd to his impudence; she is Eliza Belcour's sister; and she goes for the crack of the county, down their way, for beauty."

"Go on, sir," said Mrs. Belcour, and she looked at Mr. Courtal who stood en-

joying the scene; "how are your hopes affected by her?"

"Why, thinks I, if Miss Belcour can suffer herself to be handed about, and squired, and made love to—for you may see with half an eye what he's after—by such a swindler as that, as aint got an acre of land in the state, reason is, that a young fellow as well off as I am—not that I want to brag—but Mr. Courtal knows as well as any man——"

"I know," said Mr. Courtal, "that your worthy father left you a noble estate; you are a very good young man, and I hope you will make a good use of it; but, my friend, you are under a sad mistake with respect to the gentleman standing by Miss Belcour—he is an English nobleman."

"Odds life," said the youth, "you must tell that to them as knows no better; haven't I seen him with old Cogwell? Wasn't he put in gaol? and didn't he get out, make a circumbendibus, and get in at colonel Hopewell's, as if he was a lord?"

“ I do assure you, sir,” said Mr. Courtal, very seriously, “ that I knew the person you allude to much better than you or any other here did; and though he bore, I acknowledge, some resemblance to lord Umberdale, the story you have heard is perfectly ridiculous.”

Very blank did the lover look on this explanation, though, as he walked away, he was heard to mutter—“ There’s more than one, that I know, thinks he is a conjurer however.”

“ You see, sir,” said Mrs. Belcour, much disturbed—“ you perceive the notoriety of that unfortunate young man’s acquaintance with us. Would it not be better at once to inform lord Umberdale of the circumstance? Should he hear it from any other person——”

Mr. Courtal was amazed. That Mrs. Belcour should wish to avoid any recurrence to the circumstances connected with her daughter’s acquaintance with Percy, in the presence of her noble lover, he

thought quite natural. But the idea of the necessity of giving him a minute account of all her movements, prior to his pretensions, outraged all the old gentleman's established notions of the etiquette necessary to be observed on these occasions—unless, as he thought to himself, unless they are actually engaged.—“ I can see no necessity,” replied he, after some hesitation, “ for such a communication at present, madam. It shall be my care, that it does not get to him through unfriendly lips; and that Miss Belcour's attractions should have been felt before now, can excite little surprise in lord Umberdale.”

Mrs. Belcour found that Mr. Courtal's information on the subject did not extend as far as she had supposed, and there was no opportunity at the moment for explanation.

The fiddles were now heard provoking to the dance, and Mr. Courtal was called to a consultation, whether they should dance on the green, or return to the draw-

ing-room. Mr. Courtal declared for the green, and his voice was decisive.

The Miss Hopewells rejected the first offer of partners so decidedly, that they were soon rid of all importunities on the subject.

Maria Belcour was excused on the plea of a headach; and Eliza now put in practice a resolve, she had secretly made on the day our story commenced, never to dance again.

Such being the state of affairs amongst the fashionables, lord Umberdale, who thought it incumbent on him to pay all that attention to Mrs. Berkley's guests which the personal honour she intended him in their collection demanded, was, at his request, introduced to Miss Betsy Longacre, who, as being the gayest-dressed lady present, first struck his attention; and he was in the act of handing the delighted fair one to the head of the dance, when she was torn from him by her enraged and astonished father.

“Not if there wasn’t another man in the world,” said the indignant man of wealth, whose habitual fears on the subject of his daughter’s marrying an adventurer, had been heightened by two or three young wags who had remained with him at table for the express purpose of tormenting him—“not if there wasn’t another man in the world,” said he, pulling her towards him.

“Colonel,” said several gentlemen, “what is the meaning of this?”

“The meaning is,” said he, doggedly, “that I mean to take care of my daughter.—Boy, tell Cuffee to bring up the coach.”

“Do you know, sir,” said a gentleman, taking him by the arm, “that you have thus rudely seized your daughter from lord Umberdale?”

“Marrow bones!” said he furiously. “To be sure I know it. I know he’s lord Underdale to-day; and he’ll, may be, be lord Upperdale to-morrow; and the duke of Northumberland, with a murrain to him, the next day; but the swindling gaol-

bird shall never be duke of Maple Bottom, I'll promise him that."

"But that you are under the influence of some preposterous mistake," said lord Umberdale.

"Oh, you may spare your fine speches," said the vulgar colonel; "they are all lost on me. I know I have made a very great mistake, but I'll see to mend it presently."

He pulled his daughter through the crowd, hurried her into his coach, and drove off.

To account for this very rude behaviour of the colonel, it is necessary that we should recur to the circumstance of his arrival after the guests were arranged round the dinner-table. As lord Umberdale was seated at some distance from, and on the same side with him, and had left the table before him, he had not had a glimpse of his features, until the moment in which he saw him leading his daughter to the dance.

The bustle which this unpleasant interruption occasioned was no sooner over, than lord Umberdale, unwilling to be the sub-

ject of further remark, would have mingled in the dance with another partner.

On approaching Maria, to beg she would not again throw him on the mercy of strangers, he observed, with the deepest concern, the paleness of her face, and dejection of her air. Had Maria's affections then been engaged by an impostor, styling himself the duke of Northumberland? and was that person so much like him as to be mistaken for himself? This gave rise to a train of reflections which so absorbed his thoughts, that for a time he was unmindful of all around him. At length endeavouring to rouse himself, and turning to Eliza—"Will you have compassion," said he, "on a dejected swain, and thus, by your countenance, restore me to the good opinion of this good company?"

"I never dance, my lord," said Eliza gravely.

"Never dance!" said he. "May I ask if you object from dislike to the amusement, or from a belief of its impropriety?"

"From both causes," replied Eliza.

He looked at her for a moment in silence, and then said —“I am half disposed to believe, what I have more than once been told in the course of the day, that you are to be the future mistress of Norborne Lodge.” Without noticing her astonishment, he again applied to Maria. —“But for your indisposition, I would claim your hand for one dance, as an act of friendship; for do you not perceive that I am an object of suspicion to some of these good folks?” —he fixed his eye on her as he added —“from some real, or fancied resemblance which, I presume, I bear to a person who is unworthy their regard.”

There was a momentary flush on his cheek, and her dejection was increased by his words.

A generous, open-hearted candour was one of the peculiar traits of lord Umberdale's character; and but that delicacy forbade the question, he would have asked —“Do you know the person styling himself duke of Northumberland, and does he re-

semble me?" Scorning, however, to obtain information by other means than by an open avowal of his suspicions, and the situation in which he stood relative to Miss Belcour being by no means such as would authorize such a question, he endeavoured to dismiss the reflection from his mind, at least for the present.

"Were you really placed in the situation you describe," said Maria smiling (though not without much effort), "my headach should not excuse me, and your lordship should have my poor countenance at least. But here comes Mr. Courtal, ambassador plenipotentiary from the lady of the castle—he bears her regrets to your lordship, for the discourteous treatment you have received at the hands of her disloyal neighbour."

"To which," said Mr. Courtal, who had joined them while Maria was speaking, "is added, a positive and peremptory mandate to provide your lordship with a partner, picked and culled from the fairest of the fair now in presence; and, in virtue

of this my commission, I do hereby invest you with full possession for the time being, with——” He took Maria’s hand, and was about to put it into lord Umberdale’s.

“ But not so—not so!” said the latter, playfully putting it back. “ I will not receive that, as the gift of power and high authority, which I failed to obtain in my own proper person.”

“ Gramercy, my good lord,” said the lawyer, “ but you are ill to manage! I would endeavour to press into the service this sister excellence,” turning to Eliza; “ but alas! and well-a-day! it would be downright murder in the first degree. Mark you not the hollow eye and despairing look of yon Cymon? There is a deep mill-pond by the side of his rode home, and I would not, in his present humour, that he saw another preferred. Seriously, my lord, Mrs. Berkley has heard of the insult offered you, with an indignation which words cannot express; hartshorn and la-

vender cannot revive her. Were not the good old feudal times gone by, I should have proposed a sight of the culprit colonel dangling over the gates of her castle: next to the gratification she would receive from the contemplation of such a spectacle, will be your lordship cutting the newest caper which you have brought from the court of St. James's, before yonder window, where with difficulty she is supported, in expectation of such exhibition. Now that, in such an emergency, a befitting partner should not be found, is provoking;" and he turned his eyes towards the Miss Hopewells, who were sitting at some distance.

Into the precise nature of the feeling which induced Maria, at this moment, thus suddenly to change her mind, I will not scrutinize; but as Mr. Courtal was moving off, she rose from her seat, and said to lord Umberdale—"Will you think me very fickle if I say, I will try what dancing will do for my head this warm evening?"

"I will think you," said he, seizing her

hand and leading her away, "very kind, and very considerate;" and he might have added, without any great violence to his feelings—very lovely.

"And I," said the old lawyer, as he followed them to the dance, "will think you my peerless beauty of beauties; and thus happily have I executed my commission."

Eliza, when her sister left her to join the dance, knowing as she did the agitation of her spirits, and how little her present course would tend to compose them, felt the justice of the following lines so strongly, that when Mary Hopewell, who perceiving that she was sitting alone, joined her, she could not but indulge her feelings by repeating them.

"Oh, 'tis a fearful spectacle to see
So many maniacs dancing in their chains!
They gaze upon the links that hold them fast,
With eyes of anguish, execrate their lot,
Then shake them in despair, and dance again."

"How delighted I am," said Mary, "to find there is one person, at least, who feels as I do on these occasions, and that

the person should be you, Eliza! I thought my country education and rustic notions unfitted *me* alone to enjoy such scenes; but indeed I cannot regret it, for when I see with what avidity poor Mrs. Berkley's mind seizes on these trifles,

‘ ————— And devotes old age

To sports which childhood only could excuse’—

when I see this, and remember how differently she resolved to spend her remaining years (should she be spared), when she was so ill last winter, I am forced to conclude that those who, allowing that these things are inconsistent with the profession of religion, yet think they may freely indulge in them until old age shall, in the course of nature, wean their hearts from them, do miserably deceive themselves.”

“ And have I been so many days with you,” said Eliza, taking Mary’s hand, “ without knowing until now, that your sentiments on this subject were so exactly my own? Oh that my dear, dear Maria, could think as you do!”

These young ladies, thus pleased with

each other, observing that their cousins would not miss them, for they were surrounded by the young gentlemen to whom they had been introduced at the Hall, and the incense which the young southerners offered to the city belles appearing to be acceptable, determined to stroll through the old-fashioned garden, whose close-cropped hedge and alleys green promised a delightful retreat from the noise and bustle which, at the moment, prevailed on the terrace.

Mutually delighted at the discovery of the congeniality of their sentiments, they wandered on without a thought of the company they had left, until they reached the enclosure which bounded the most retired and distant part of the garden; and where, through a now open gate, they, without reflection, entered on the road, which winding round it, led up to the house.

They had scarce discovered that they had passed the limit to which they meant to circumscribe their walk, and were about to

return, when two persons on horseback advanced up the road, and ere they could regain the garden, Eliza recognised in the foremost the young stranger of the inn. Bowing, with gravity, he appeared about to pass on, when observing Eliza, he sprang from his horse, threw the rein to the person who accompanied him, and exclaimed, as he advanced towards her—"Is it possible I have the happiness to see Miss Belcour a visitor at Norborne? I had supposed her at New-York."

As on a former occasion, so now also, the idea of colonel Berkley's illness was so blended with the recollection of this stranger, that she again felt impelled to the immediate inquiry of—"How, sir, was colonel Berkley when you last saw him?"

"He is recovering, Miss Belcour," said the stranger, "though slowly, I fear. Few things can afford him more satisfaction than the intelligence, which he shall not fail to receive, of the undiminished interest which you feel for him."

"I shall ever feel a deep interest for

him," said Eliza; and as she recurred in memory to the scene in which they had last met, her countenance assumed a solemnity, and she asked, with a feeling which ill accorded with the splendid and gay habiliments in which she was arrayed, "and in the highest concern, sir"—she appeared at a loss how to express herself; but after a pause, said, "in the highest of all concerns, sir, 'is it well with him?'"

The stranger gazed at her with an air of intense interest.—"I have the unspeakable happiness to answer," said he, "that 'it is well with him!'"—and oh! may I not understand from such a question, so solemnly, so feelingly asked—may I not understand, that, notwithstanding appearances (he blushed deeply as his eye glanced on her full dress), that it is still well with you?"

Eliza had for some time been accustomed to regulate her dress by her mother's wishes on the subject, it being one on which she herself felt a perfect indifference; and she excused her compliance with all

the vagaries of fashion by the plea of a wish to avoid singularity—that plea so constantly used by those whom Miss More designates as “*some sort of good people*.” Though complying in this and all other outward observances, from a sense of filial duty, Eliza had frequently shuddered at the recollection, that the Almighty had promised to take those, and only those, as his sons and daughters who should come out from the world and be separated.

Though highly condemning fashionable extravagance in the abstract, she had never until now been called on to make a practical application of her censure to her own individual person. To have a reflection thrown upon her dress and appearance, must, under any circumstance, have been sufficiently mortifying; but in the present instance, she felt it distressing to be thus rebuked by one whose every word she had yet heard breathed respect for her, and was calculated to produce a corresponding feeling of esteem for him. But disconcerted as she was, she was not

surprised at the stranger's observation: she, always fashionably and elegantly dressed, was now arrayed in all those foreign ornaments which might be supposed to render her the admiration of a ball-room.

Though he perceived and felt for her emotion, the stranger did not apologize: his manner was confused and undecided. For a moment he turned towards his horse, as if he meant to remount; in the next, he followed the young ladies, who had hastily reentered the garden. As he overtook them, he again bowed—"Miss Mary Hopewell, I presume," said he. "I have heard of her kind attentions here."

"Astonishing!" thought Eliza; "can this wanderer be a Methodist preacher?" His dress was plain, but the beauty of the horse he rode had not escaped her; and was the person by whom he was accompanied his servant? Methodist preachers all ride good horses; and the little ceremony with which they treat each other, might account for the one holding, with-

out any expressed request, the horse of the other.

As these reflections crossed her mind, they continued to approach the house. The stranger accompanied them, and from time to time addressed Mary, neither with the bashful diffidence of one uncertain of his reception, nor with the boldness of an impudent intruder, but with the assured ease of a gentleman, who knew he was occupying only his proper sphere.

Convinced that on their arrival at the house she must either be presented to him in his true character of a gentleman, if such he was, or find that there existed insuperable bars to their further acquaintance, Eliza felt the throbbing of her heart to be so violent as to be almost audible, and clinging to Mary's arm, she hurried along, unable to speak until they approached so near as to hear the sound of the music.

The stranger stopped, struck motionless, as it seemed, by surprise.—“One instant, young ladies,” said he—“one instant. Can

it be that there is dancing at Norborne Lodge?"

"Mrs. Berkley," said Mary, "has several young friends with her, and they are, as you perceive, dancing on the green."

"Was it accident," said the stranger, with much interest, "or was it a regularly designed ball?"

"It was understood there was to be dancing, I believe," said Mary, and she was going on.

"Yet a moment's delay," said the stranger, stepping before them and stopping their further progress; "I go no further to-night in that direction.—Miss Belcour," said he, gravely, "I owe you some apology—I could not know you were at a ball." Again his eye glanced on her dress. "A ball at Norborne Lodge! Then my information was incorrect, and Ephraim is again joined to his idols. Poor old lady!

"Miss Belcour," he continued, "you will think me very bold—nay, impertinent; and it cannot be but that you must, as yet, remain under that impression; yet

I feel a deep interest——” He blushed and hesitated, then proceeded with more composure, though with still much animation——“ I will not suffer myself to believe that you will rest satisfied with being ‘almost a Christian.’ That you have left those revels, and are, even at this moment, seeking seclusion from a scene like that, with such a companion as Miss Mary Hopewell, to whose sentiments I am no stranger, speaks volumes of comfort to——” He checked himself as though he had already expressed more than he intended.

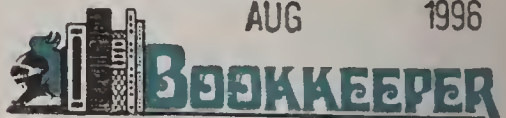
An unexpected interruption prevented his saying more, if such was his intention, for approaching steps were heard, and issuing from a walk, bounded by a high box hedge, Mrs. Belcour, escorted by the gallant lawyer, joined the party.

END OF VOL. II.

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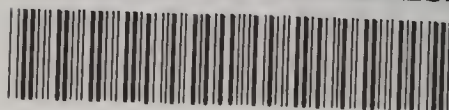
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